

THE OCTOBER LEAGUE (M-L)

WHAT ARE OUR DIFFERENCES, WHAT IS THE BASIS OF THESE DIFFERENCES?

The ideology, politics, program and practical activity of the October League represent a definite right opportunist trend, not simply a right deviation. They have taken a "definite shape and crystallized", as Stalin would say. In regard to party building, the OL negates the role of the conscious factor and denies the advanced forms that the working class movement takes.

On the national question, the OL denies the material basis for the oppression of the Black Nation, basing its line on sentiment. This is a line which, if left uncorrected, will lead to the liquidation of class struggle and the Black National Question. On these and other questions the line of the October League is petty-bourgeois liberalism, social democracy, not Marxism-Leninism.

WORKERS OPPRESSED NATIONS AND PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

UNITE!



MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE WORKING CLASS

Nothing is Hard in This World If You Dare to Scale the Heights

REPORT FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Since 1917, each passing year has seen tremendous changes occur in the world. Even with setbacks, the progress of the proletariat towards its world historic mission has been steady, and the decline and decay of the old world has been constant. 1975 was a year in which the national liberation struggles scored historic victories against United States Imperialism and Soviet Social Imperialism-- in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and in Africa.

In numerous Third World countries, the struggle against United State Imperialism Soviet Social Imperialism and hegemonism has won constant victories, particularly with the formation of new economic and political formations in Latin America (the 25 member Latin American Economic Community resulting in the "Panama Agreement"), in Africa (the MAGHREB Market in North Africa, as well as similar organizations in East, Central and West

Africa), designed to safeguard economic independence and counter the hegemonic aims of the two superpowers. Over 30 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America have nationalized foreign enterprises after abolishing the right of foreign concessions and permanent exploitation. These and other important steps have occurred since the emergence of OPEC in the early 1970's.

In a very brief period of time, the old economic order of superpower hegemonism has begun to crumble, an entirely new stage of world economic relations is emerging, a genuine new economic order. These and other events are reflected in the progressive role assumed by the United Nations, particularly through the 7th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. At the heart of these great changes in the world is the Third World, the revolutionary force in the world propelling history forward.

Since 1917, and especially since World War II, the sharpening of all the

basic contradictions in the world has been escalating. Lenin noted that "modern war is born of Imperialism." But with the dissolution of the socialist camp and the restoration of capitalism, "The Soviet Union is under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, a dictatorship of the Hitler type. We must recognize that certain characteristics of the new system of Soviet Social Imperialism have made it the most dangerous source of war today. Locked in fierce battle for the redivision of the world, the two superpowers are bound to go to war some day."

Since World War II, the capitalist world has been experiencing the second stage of the general crisis of capitalism-- a crisis over the economic redivision of the world, born out of the absolute shrinking of the Imperialist market. This is no longer a crisis like that of the first stage of the

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Eternal Glory to Comrade Chou En-Lai

In the revolutionary spirit of proletarian internationalism a Memorial Meeting for Comrade Chou En-Lai was held in San Francisco, California on January 16, 1976. By turning grief into strength and strength into unity, the participants in this memorial held the revolutionary tradition of the working class in paying last respects to a great proletarian revolutionary and outstanding communist fighter.

Organizations sponsoring this Memorial Meeting were: Asian Law Caucus, Asian Community Television Services, Bay Area Community Chapter of the Japanese-American Citizens League, February First Movement, I Wor Kuen, Iranian Students Association, J-Town Collective, KDP, Marxist-Leninist Organizing Committee, October League (M-L), Radical Student Union (Berkeley), South Asian Students Association.



1898-1976

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Report from the Central Committee

general crisis, when imperialism was relatively stable, and still able to expand its economic influence. It is, rather, a crisis of the absolute decline of imperialism, an all round crisis, economic, political, ideological, cultural, etc., a crisis from which there will be no genuine recovery.

War is the forced resolution of the general crisis for the bourgeoisie.

Historically Europe has been the main battleground for world war. Today it is once again the main scene of contention between United States Imperialism and Soviet Social Imperialism. The Soviet Social Imperialists, deploying three quarters of their troops in Europe, are the main source of a new world war. In Africa, as well, Soviet Social Imperialism is seeking unbridled hegemony.

If a new Imperialist war breaks out, war will give way to revolution. The exploited and oppressed masses of the USSR and the United States must then turn the Imperialist war into revolutionary war. It is the masses who will win the war, not the imperialists.

The struggle of the working masses everywhere has advanced in the last year on all fronts, economically, politically, and theoretically. Economically, the struggle against hegemonism has advanced. In the Third World, oil producing countries have persisted in using the oil weapon and have achieved new victories, many have persisted in the struggle to achieve and maintain sovereignty over various natural resources, and helped to forge a genuine new world economic order.

A further development in the rising of a new economic order is the growing readjustment of the economic relations between the Second World and Third World. "With the growth and development of the



Third World, more and more Second World countries, motivated by considerations of their own economic interests and their need to counter the two hegemonic powers, are for 'dialogue' with the Third World countries and are actively developing relations with them." (PEKING REVIEW, 12/19/75, #51, p. 11)

Politically, the various Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations in the world have grown stronger ideologically, and organizationally, socialist construction in China, Albania, North Korea, North Vietnam and Romania has proceeded at a great pace. In numerous countries the working masses have achieved independence. In numerous capitalist and revisionist countries, the bourgeois state apparatus is twisting and turning in the wake of political struggles. At the same time, we are now in a period in which the dictatorship of the proletariat exists in several countries, is consolidated and stands as a mighty fortress for the working class of the world. Great socialist China, and mighty Albania, in persistently strengthening and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat are reliable beacons for the struggle of all oppressed and exploited everywhere.

At the same time, the ideological crisis of imperialism is clearly expressed in the struggle on the *theoretical front*. Class struggle on this front has increasingly exposed the old bourgeois Keynesian economics as completely bankrupt, and outlived even for use by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois plays of Soviet Social Imperialism of an "international division of labor" or "peace through detente" are being consistently exposed.

The masses of the world have taken great strides against imperialist reaction, striking blows which have weakened imperialism more than at any other time since the end of World War II. In particular, the rise of the working class in the capitalist countries is reaching new levels of political activity which demands the conscious leadership of Marxist-Leninists.

CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE UNITED STATES

In the United States, we have left the second, and last, century of bourgeois rule. This next period ahead is the era in which the working and exploited masses of the United States will rise up and smash the rule of the bourgeoisie, and establish a proletarian dictatorship. This will be the century of the proletariat. The depth of the crisis of bourgeois rule runs very deep in the United States, reflecting the fundamental and insoluble contradictions of the capitalist mode of production.

Raw steel production ran at about 19% less than the 1974 figure, the number of housing units built in the United States was the lowest in 29 years and all indications point towards that number dropping even further. Unemployment soared to 8 million workers--even by official records. In the words of Business Week, "For the past year industry has been operating at its lowest level since World War II."

The overall drastic decline in production meshes with skyrocketing inflation revealing the profound contradictions of the capitalist mode of production. The economic onslaught of the bourgeoisie against the workers is coupled with the political attacks against the working class as a whole, and particularly against the oppressed nation in the Black Belt South, and the various national minorities in this country.

The revolutionary class struggle and the revolutionary national struggles call out for conscious leadership--leadership that only a vanguard communist party can provide. The forging of this vanguard communist party is undeniably the central task, the key link in this period of the revolutionary struggle.

The communist party is the biggest step in the fusion of communism with the workers movement. However, this process is constant up through the seizure of state power, after the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, up until the elimination of classes, and the emergence of communist society.

At this time, the main form this fusion takes is the winning of the advanced elements of the working class. The formation of the party will constitute a most important qualitative advance in this regard, but it will not in and of itself complete this fusion--that will be achieved only in the course of a protracted and intense class struggle which will extend over a long historical period.

As the most advanced elements of the revolutionary movement, Marxist-Leninists are stepping forward where possible to lead the masses of workers and oppressed nationalities and minorities in the struggle against capital.

Since the bourgeois degeneration of the CPUSA in 1944, the central task of all Marxist-Leninists has been the reconstitution of a vanguard communist party. This struggle, in essence, is the struggle to break ideologically, politically and organizationally with modern revisionism, to free the advanced from the most obvious shackles of bourgeois ideology. Ultimately this break must be made by the entire class.

IDEOLOGICAL BREAK

In COMMUNIST LINE # 1, we stated that "for the most part, the ideological break has been made." We have received many questions about this in recent months, and we would like to clarify this point further. We do not mean that the ideological break

has been completed--for this would be impossible in bourgeois society, where the dominant class, and therefore the dominant ideology, is bourgeois. We certainly recognize that the ideological struggle is the most protracted of all, and for this reason, as the Albanian comrades state, the class struggle is first consolidated on the political front (state power), second on the economic front (establishment of socialist relations of production), and lastly, ideologically. Ideological consolidation is achieved with the elimination of class distinctions.

Important achievements have already been made in the ideological struggle to break with modern revisionism, a genuine Marxist-Leninist movement has definitely emerged as separate from the modern revisionists and social democrats, part of the worldwide Marxist-Leninist movement. By stating that an ideological break has been made for the most part, we mean that the Marxist-Leninist movement has broken substantially with the bourgeois world outlook, and taken up the proletarian world outlook, and that we strive to *practice* the stand, viewpoint and method of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

In summing up this struggle to break ideologically with modern revisionism, the outlook of the bourgeoisie in the communist movement, we point to several important advances which represent this break: (1) upholding the historic mission of the working class established by Marx and Engels in 1848, and thus reaffirming the general line for the working class movement, (2) persisting in the struggle to master dialectical historical materialism as our world outlook, (3) grasping Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as our theoretical guide to action, while upholding the mobilizing, transforming,



and organizing power of revolutionary theory, (4) upholding the right of all oppressed nations to self-determination and oppressed minorities to full democratic rights--which is particularly important in regard to the oppressed nationalities and minorities in the United States, (5) recognizing the leading role of the Chinese Communist Party and the Albanian Party of Labor in the struggle to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat and against the two superpowers, recognizing that we are part of an international working class and communist movement, (6) recognizing that the restoration of capitalism has taken place in the USSR, giving rise to Soviet Social Imperialism, the split in the socialist camp and the sundering of the world into three parts, (7) that in practice, Marxist-Leninists seek to unite, not split, (8) that our attitude towards mistakes is to practice criticism and self-criticism before the masses.

POLITICAL LINE IS KEY, THEORY DECISIVE

For the current state of the movement, significant advances on the ideological front resulted in the break that occurred with the Revolutionary Union over party building as the central task and the Black National Question carried on largely by the Black Workers Congress and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization. From that time on, roughly since 1972-1973, our task has been to deepen this break ideologically through the development of political line.

Political line is key and theory is decisive. This is not a question of consolidating around the existing politi-



cal line, but of the *development of political line*. The MLOC believes that linking the development of political line to the decisiveness of theory at this time deepens our grasp of the nature of the task at hand, and helps to distinguish the line of the MLOC from others on this question.

To hold that political line is key and theory is decisive means that the focus of work must be directed towards the development of political line, in the course of laying a granite theoretical foundation, summing up our past practice and errors, repudiating these errors, and testing the developing political line in the course of leading the class struggle.

In the heat of class struggle, a number of questions have arisen around which definite lines of demarcation between Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and opportunism have been drawn. This is the basis for identifying the *emerging revolutionary trend*, not abstract book definitions, not merely attitudes. These questions are (1) party building as the central task and key link in this period, the struggle against opportunism in the course of the fusion of the workers and communist movements, (2) self-determination for the Black Nation in the Black Belt South, up to and including secession, (3) political line is key and theory is decisive

the party and the national question are component parts of the capability of the proletariat seizing state power and establishing its dictatorship. While we must not compromise principles on any of the questions advanced, or future issues of political line, for a genuine vanguard center to emerge out of the revolutionary trend, there must be utmost clarity on these two questions.

We do not see these questions as static, and definitely believe that other struggles will emerge around which definite lines of demarcation will be drawn, which will *become* distinguishing characteristics of the revolutionary trend.

At this time, the MLOC does not believe that any single organization has demonstrated its ability to provide vanguard leadership to the emerging trend, but rather that a center will develop out of this trend in struggle against opportunism to develop a political line.

In pointing to an emerging revolutionary trend, the MLOC stands on the importance of political line and the decisiveness of theory. The revolutionary trend does not distinguish itself by simply meeting the ideological requirement of self-criticism. The real question is one of genuine leadership, in theory and practice, of the development of political line which consolidates a definite trend, forges a center which provides genuine vanguard leadership to the advanced elements of the class struggle, and forges a vanguard communist party -- a party which will stand at the head of the class struggle.

The emerging revolutionary trend consists of a number of organizations and collectives around the country. No single organization has yet demonstrated its genuine vanguard role theoretically or politically. These eight

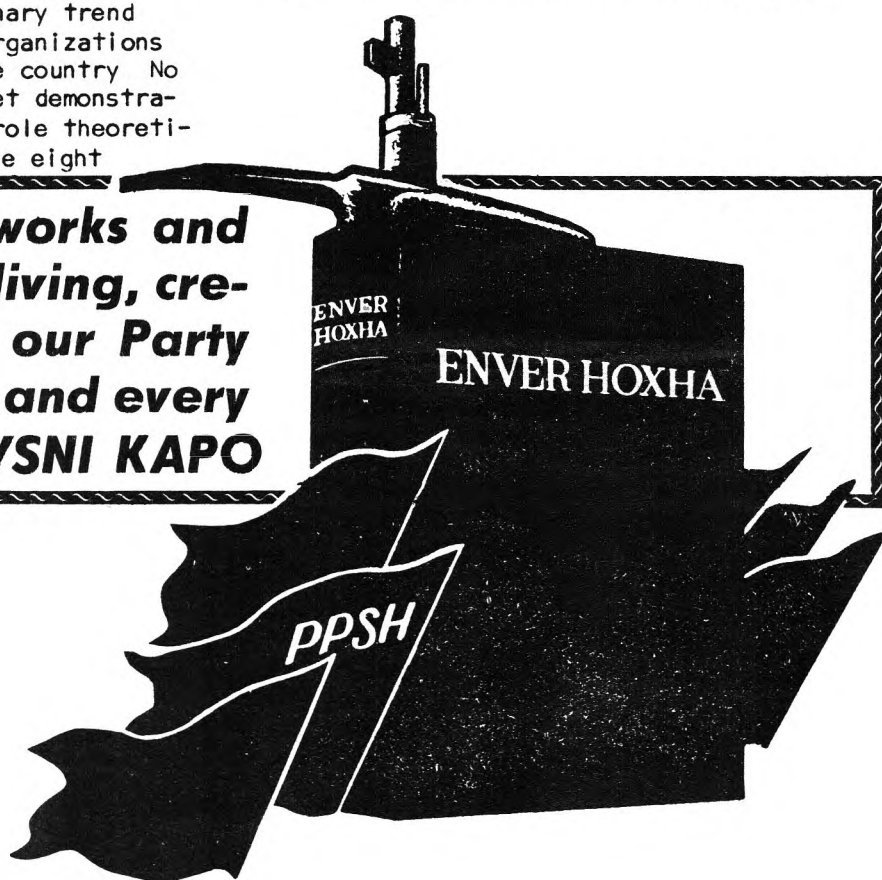
development of political line. The heart of such a conscious plan is (1) *joint theoretical work* and (2) *joint political work*. This is a question of concentrating a superior force to defeat the enemy.

Joint theoretical work means waging a national campaign on the theoretical front, relying upon the theoretical resources of many organizations and collectives to develop a conscious agenda of theoretical tasks over a definite period of time to solve many pressing questions of theory which face the revolution. Joint political work means common work in (a) campaigns on various fronts of the workers struggles in trade unions, directed against the state, or in the national struggles, particularly the Black National struggle, Chicano National struggle and the struggle of the Puerto Rican people, (b) common summations of practice by organizations, where lessons are learned from mistakes and correct policy developed for future struggles.

In the context of joint theoretical and political work, polemics serve to "clarify the depth of existing differences, in order to afford discussion of disputed questions from all angles, in order to combat the extremes into which representatives of various views, various localities, or various 'specialties' of the revolutionary movement inevitably fall." (Lenin, "Draft Declaration of the Editorial Board of *Iskra* and *Zarya*," CW, vol 4, p 328). Polemics serve the larger task of the development of political line; they are

«Comrade Enver Hoxha's ideas, works and teachings are an invaluable treasury of living, creative and acting Marxism-Leninism for our Party and people, from which every communist and every working man must continually learn». HYSNI KAPO

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANIZING COMMITTEE ENCOURAGES ALL MARXIST-LENINISTS TO STUDY CAREFULLY THE WRITINGS OF COMRADE ENVER HOXHA WHICH ARE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE TO GAINING THOROUGH AND ALL-ROUND UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORICAL WORLD IMPORTANCE OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST MODERN REVISIONISM, AND THE CORRECTNESS OF THE LINE OF THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA.



in the struggle to consolidate the break ideologically, politically, and organizationally with opportunism, (4) Marxists-Leninists Unite as our task in the communist movement, (5) right opportunism, namely economism and American exceptionalism, as the main danger in the workers and communist movements, (6) win the advanced to communism as our task in the workers movement, (7) factory nuclei as the basic unit of the party in the working class, (8) in carrying out propaganda and agitation, propaganda is in the forefront in the period of winning over the advanced to communism.

Two questions must stand out as the two legs upon which the revolution will walk in this country. These two are first, the nature of the party, which is a question of the *leadership* of the proletarian class struggle, and second, the Black National Question, which is a question of the *unity* of the proletariat. On these two questions, more than any others, the revolution will stand or fall. This has proven itself to be the case historically in this country. Both the question of

questions of political line are advanced in order to help draw lines of demarcation, to sort out genuine from sham. What is important in evaluating the role of any organization or collective is not their stand at a particular moment on a particular issue, but their motion towards or away from a correct ideological and political line. Therefore it would be mechanistic to use these lines of demarcation as some criteria for membership in the emerging revolutionary trend. More important, it is the question of the ideological and political motion of any organization. On the other hand, those organizations which have already taken incorrect stands, particularly on the Black National Question, cannot be considered a genuine part or element of our movement.

FORGING UNITY AMONGST MARXIST-LENINISTS

While there are few who deny party building as the central task, organizations must be judged on what they are actually doing to advance the party in a conscious manner.

To forge a center from the *emerging revolutionary trend*, we must undertake a definite plan and policy toward the

not the basis of political line. Polemics come to the forefront after the basic theoretical foundations of the movement have been laid. The unification of the revolutionary trend is served by polemics helping to draw clear lines of demarcation.

It is primarily through such joint theoretical and political work that a correct and comprehensive political line will develop, capable of uniting Marxist-Leninists and advanced workers into a single center. *This center would then utilize an Iskra type press to win over all undecided elements, and would constitute the basis for the formation of a vanguard party.* This is the lesson we draw from Lenin's experience in Czarist Russia. In 1896, Lenin proposed that the situation was ripe to pass from propaganda centered around a few advanced workers gathered in propaganda circles to political agitation. By this time, the theoretical foundations of the party had already been established, through the analysis of capitalist agriculture, the development of capitalism, the specific character of national oppression, etc. In the United States, *once* a center has

(Cont p 4)

emerged, a definite trend, which means a trend which advances a unified political line on the important questions facing the revolution, then an Iskra type newspaper is appropriate, not before

Then an Iskra type newspaper is demanded to serve as a collective organizer for the party. The task of Iskra was to unify the movement, in that a very definite Social Democratic trend did exist by the time of the First Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1898. It was the task of Iskra to win to the side of the genuine Bolsheviks all those who had not yet been consolidated, to draw clear lines of demarcation between the two existing trends.

PREPARE FOR STRUGGLE

The immediate period ahead will be a period of intense class struggle in which both the bourgeoisie and the working class will continue to mobilize themselves for the inevitable clash ahead. This definitely is a period, as Lenin described in *WHAT IS TO BE DONE?*, when "the mass movement puts before us new theoretical, political and organizational tasks far more complicated than those that might have satisfied in the period before the rise of the mass movement."

This is definitely a period in which communists must prepare for all forms of struggle, cast away illusions,

94TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1

A BILL

To codify, revise, and reform title 18 of the United States Code, to make appropriate amendments to the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, to make conforming amendments to criminal provisions of other titles of the United States Code, and for other purposes

By Mr. McCLELLAN, Mr. HRUSKA, Mr. BAYH, Mr. EASTLAND, Mr. FONG, Mr. GRIFFIN, Mr. MANSFIELD, Mr. MOSS, Mr. SCOTT of Pennsylvania, Mr. TAFT, and Mr. TOWER

JANUARY 15 1975

Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

and deepen work among the masses

The next several months will see a sharp struggle on the economic and political fronts as numerous trade unions face crucial bargaining, 436,340 Teamsters in April, 117,000 construction workers in June, 125,000 electrical workers the same month, and in September, over three quarters of a million auto workers face contract negotiations with the bourgeoisie.

These struggles demand class conscious leadership, and this task falls upon the shoulders of genuine Marxist-Leninists. This leadership must be advanced in the course of building the party, that is uniting Marxist-Leninists, winning the advanced to communism, building factory nuclei and developing the means of propaganda.

In the period ahead, we must recognize the increasing tempo of the struggle by the Black Nation for self-determination and by oppressed minorities for democratic rights. In the last year, for example, the struggle over busing, the formation of the Black Womens' United Front, the struggle and triumph of Joann Little, the fight of Hurricane Carter for freedom, the freeing of Martin Sostre, all indicate that the revolutionary struggle against national oppression is a component part of the class struggle against imperialism, and will continue to play a leading role in the struggle of the multi-national working class. Increasing attention must be directed by Marxist-Leninists towards linking the class and national struggles, towards uniting Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought with advanced elements

in the Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican struggles in particular, towards developing African Liberation Day as a multi-national event, and other important developments in the course of the national struggles against imperialism.

BUILD THE PARTY

The unity of the multi-national proletariat must be forged by giving conscious leadership to the working class and national struggles. This leadership must be intensified within the context of the growing preparations for war and fascism by the bourgeoisie. Such efforts as *Senate Bill 1* indicate that the bourgeoisie still utilizes the priest rather than the hangman--but the priest is only sent to give the blessing for the hangman's noose which is already tightening around the neck of the working class.

Intensified contention by the two superpowers will inevitably lead to war, and fascism goes hand in hand with the preparation for war. *Fascism and war are rooted in the objective conditions of imperialism.* After the emergence of monopoly capitalism, the material base for bourgeois democracy ceased to exist. Monopoly does not need or desire the "free competition" upon which bourgeois democracy is based. As Lenin said, "Political reaction all along the line is a characteristic feature of imperialism" (*IMPERIALISM AND THE SPLIT IN SOCIALISM*, Lenin's Collected Works, Vol 23, p 106). *Senate Bill 1* is merely a legalism to hide and protect the dictatorship of a tiny minority, the bourgeoisie, and to undercut the growing progressive and democratic tides within the United States which are moving against the bourgeois state apparatus.

Both the *Bicentennial* and the *November election* are two extremely important sacraments used by the bourgeois priest to deceive the working class and to deflect it from its world historic mission. The advanced detachments of the working class must turn this around, expose the Bicentennial and the fascist sentiment of chauvinist patriotism that goes with it, pointing out the glorious revolutionary history of the working class and its historic mission. Against the revisionist slogan of "A Bicentennial without colonies", we must pose the revolutionary slogan of "No nation can be free as long as it oppresses another nation".

The bourgeois elections in November must become an opportunity for the working class to expose the nature of the bourgeois dictatorship, point out that democracy is an illusion for the working masses under capitalism, and teach the workers that they must rely upon themselves. The MLOC will be taking up these questions in a future issue of *UNITE!*

Our task of exposing the nature of the bourgeois dictatorship and mobilizing the working masses for struggle in the course of forging a vanguard communist party is constantly thwarted by both the social democratic reformers and the revisionists. In striking blows against the bourgeoisie we must aim to stride through the midst of these revisionist and reformist dogs who feed off the bones, sweat and blood of the exploited and oppressed peoples and nations of the world. This pack of mongrels must be kicked aside as the working class moves in to behead the bourgeoisie.

OUR TASKS

These are but a few of the struggles which await us in the next year and beyond. However, each and every theoretical, political and organizational task which awaits us must be taken up within the context of our central task, that of forging the party, in which political line is key and theory is decisive. The MLOC has advanced its views on party building, (1) *development of political line*, (2) *Bolshevization of the movement*, (3) *uniting Marxist-Leninists through joint theoretical and political work*, (4) *winning the advanced to communism through propaganda*. These tasks con-

firm themselves in reality every day as the basic road towards the party. As well, we have elaborated our views on some elements of a plan and policy to carry out the task of uniting Marxists-Leninists.

FIRST, taking the theoretical form of class struggle as the chief form of class struggle in this period, and political line as key, the MLOC has set definite goals of advancing its basic line on many of the pressing questions faced by the proletariat.

SECOND, Bolshevization is not synonymous with professionalization or abstract concepts of discipline. *Bol-*



shevization is the all round development of a Leninist party, a party in the era of imperialism, the eve of proletarian revolution. Bolshevization encompasses the tasks of molding the revolutionary movement into a communist form by leading the masses in struggle. In this sense, also, political line is key in carrying through the ideological break to an organizational form. As in all things, one divides into two in the task of consolidating the ideological break from the interests of the bourgeoisie. In the unity of political line and organizational line, political line is now key. As the unity of the working class with communism is made, one aspect will turn into its opposite, organization will become key through the consolidation of honest forces around political line.

A key task of Bolshevization today, is linking the central task of party building to the changing conditions, linking party building to the growing threat of war and fascism. This is fundamentally an ideological question, of grasping the true nature of imperialism, the role of Soviet Social Imperialism today.

BUILD THE PARTY IN PREPARATION FOR WAR

Our party must be built in the actual situation of the transition from bourgeois democracy to fascism, which is no qualitative movement, but *quantitative*, since in the age of imperialism, "The difference between the democratic-republican and reactionary-monarchistic bourgeoisie is obliterated precisely because they are both rotting alive" (Lenin, *IMPERIALISM AND THE SPLIT IN SOCIALISM*, CW, Vol 23, p 106). There exists no difference between the bourgeois imperialist state and the ruthless, vicious oppressiveness of czarist autocracy.

In order to persist in the revolutionary struggle we must concretely consider the varied conditions of the class struggle, the inter-relationship of forces within the working class, the varying political and ideological attitudes of the masses, and the degree of disintegration of capitalism, that is, the state of the imperialist crisis. This is the basis for determining the appropriate tactics to defeat this rising tide of reaction. The degree of Bolshevization of our movement is not a matter of our ability to hide a small group of people or even simply questions of security and defense. These are only small aspects which are, however, important for the preservation of the party and its cadres.

One more aspect of Bolshevization is the digging of deep roots in the working class through the formation of factory

nuclei as the basic unit of the communist movement. This is the only genuine defense of the advanced elements of the working class, the party and the revolution. *Our sole purpose in forging a Bolshevik party is to lead the struggle of the masses in the conquest of state power, the formation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and eventually, communist society.*

A key question to raise in this context is our attitude towards the imperialist state, conspiratorial work and illegality. The basic principle of illegal work is the "ability to preserve the mass character of the party in its underground activity during the most savage terror. The essence of illegality lies in carrying on uninterrupted mass work, and in having a constant influx of new help from the masses--this with the help of a strongly welded hidden organization" (COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, "On the Question of Illegal Work", 1933, p.854). The basis of all under-estimation of the complete reactionary nature of the imperialist state, of the under-estimation of the ferociousness of the state apparatus that remains to be unleashed, of the inability to adapt communist work and organization to illegality, is *legalism*, the glossing over of the nature of the bourgeois state as an apparatus of class violence. This is the essence of Bolshevik conspiratorial methods, illegality which serves to deepen and extend the involvement of the masses in the proletarian revolution.

EXPOSE AND ISOLATE PETTY BOURGEOIS TERRORISTS

This is in stark contrast to the counter-revolutionary activity of such groups as the Weather Underground, the New World Liberation Front, and other such terrorist organizations which reveal themselves to the masses only at the end of a fuse. Such sham counter-revolutionary groups must be exposed and isolated ideologically and politically, or objectively they only serve to aid the imperialist state and increase the reign of bourgeois violence on the masses. Objectively, they represent an arm of the bourgeoisie expressed through petty bourgeois terrorism. The terrorism of such groups as the Symbionese Liberation Army is nothing but a form of armed petty bourgeois reformism.

"The various anti-Marxist trends of the Trotskyists and anarchists have been activated as never before ... Although they frequently come out with ultra-revolutionary and anti-revisionist slogans, in fact they are playing the revisionists' game, and they are undermining the cause of revolution altogether."

(Enver Hoxha, REPORT ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PLA, 6TH CONGRESS, p 212-213)

MAKE REVOLUTION - PREVENT FASCISM

Only a fool would neglect to realize that living in the most powerful state in the history of class society, the United States bourgeoisie can be expected to unleash the most ferocious attack upon the working class, the most brutal fascist oppression yet. There is one, and only one safeguard for the revolution, and that is to rely upon the working class itself, to mobilize the masses in the course of the economic, political and theoretical forms of struggle of the working class movement. Dimitrov pointed out that "whether the victory of fascism can be prevented depends in the first place on the militant activity displayed by the working class itself... Second, on the existence of a strong revolutionary party. Third, whether a correct policy is pursued by the working class towards the peasants and the petty bourgeois masses of the towns. Fourth, whether the revolutionary proletariat exercises vigilance and take actions at the proper time." (Dimitrov, THE UNITED FRONT AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM, p 12)

Correctly building the party in the context of the transition from bourgeois democratic rule to fascism is a question of vital importance, which will determine our ability to train successors to the revolutionary cause of the

working class in this country. The vanguard party must be forged in the context of uniting the working masses against the two superpowers, mobilizing all progressive strata people to every and all manifestation of the contention between the two superpowers, and particularly against Soviet Social Imperialism, the main source of the threat of war today. Marxist-Leninists must actively go about building the united front against the two superpowers today.

THIRD, in regard to Uniting Marxist-Leninists, our views on this question have already been developed on this question. Elements of our plan and policy to carry out this task center on joint theoretical and political work. FOURTH, winning the advanced to communism. In the course of carrying out this task, and through struggle with other organizations and comrades, the MLOC has come to realize that the formulation of the advanced worker put forward in UNITE!, Vol 1, No.1, WAS INCORRECT. We stated that,

"This worker has a sense of their class interest, and the unity of this interest with the struggle of the oppressed nationalities and minorities. They are active in fighting for the interests of their class, and already realize the need for fundamental change, though they may not call it revolutionary change. They are searching for a scientific understanding of their exploitation and oppression, and for a clear answer as to the solution. In other words, they are open to communism, and do not have anti-communist opinions".

Comrades, this more aptly describes an intermediate worker, not the advanced worker. In a RETROGRADE TREND IN RUSSIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.4, p.280) Comrade Lenin describes the advanced worker

"The history of the working class movement in all countries shows that the better situated strata of the working class responds to the ideas of socialism more rapidly and more easily. From among these come, in the main, the advanced workers that every working class movement brings to the fore, those who can win the confidence of the laboring masses, who devote themselves entirely to the education and organization of the proletariat, who accept socialism

consciously, and who even elaborate independent socialist theories ...". In criticizing the retrograde trend of the time, Lenin pointed out earlier in the same article (p.255-6) that the Rabochaya Mysl trend "reveals an extremely narrow conception of the working class movement and a desire to close his eyes to the higher forms of that movement which have evolved under the leadership of the Russian Social Democrats."

Two important points must be made here. First, Lenin is very clear that "every working class movement brings to the fore" such advanced workers, not just the Bolsheviks. *Lenin here is speaking about the general conditions of the capitalist mode of production which bring to the fore advanced workers, i.e. the spontaneous struggle between labor and capital.*

Second, Lenin in the second passage indicates that an important aspect of the under-estimation of the working class movement by the retrograde trend was to deny the higher forms of the movement that arise "under the leadership of Russian Social Democrats." In other words, that it is through the leadership of communists that advanced workers come forward, not in the presence of economist, revisionist or social democratic leadership. Concretely, given the economist trade union work of the RCP, it is little wonder they do not draw out advanced workers, because advanced workers shy away from opportunist leadership.

MLOC ON ADVANCED WORKERS

The original view of the MLOC stated in UNITE! Vol. 1, no. 1 reflected remnants of right opportunism within the organization. It denied and neglected revolutionary theory as a guide to action and the advanced forms the working class movement takes, and, instead, focused narrowly on our own experience. In trying to determine why our work in certain plants had not advanced adequately, in struggle with comrades and friends, through studying carefully what Lenin actually said and in summing up our own experience with an eye to identify right tendencies, we came to realize the incorrectness of our view and to embrace the genuine Marxist-Leninist position of Comrade Lenin.

In addition, we came to understand that Comrade Lenin's evaluation of the

(Cont. p 6)



era of imperialism is, obviously, applicable to the class struggle in the United States, for Lenin is clear that such workers arise "in every capitalist country." In terms of independently elaborating socialist theory, we would note that in Russia a theoretical base had already been laid in the working class by the time Lenin wrote this article. Historically in the U.S., with (1) the lack of development of the struggle on the theoretical front, combined with (2) the existence of a strong, though small, labor aristocracy created out of the superprofits of imperialism and (3) thirty years of strong revisionist presence in the working class, the situation is not exactly the same as in Russia. However, it is definitely correct that advanced workers seek to independently elaborate socialist theory even if they confront many obstacles in this task.

The source of this error was in economist tendencies, in tailing after the masses. Concretely, in not giving leadership to struggles, armed with the most advanced theory. The conditions in which this error arose were in the course of spontaneously directing cadre in mass work without consolidating the break with revisionist methods and styles of work. The ideological source of this error is clearly the petty bourgeois view which, because of its vacillating material base, sacrifices the interests of the proletariat to the passing interests of the petty bourgeoisie. Summing up such practice revealed the incorrectness of our views. In the course of repudiating this error, our experience to date has confirmed the importance of rectification on this question and work in certain plants has advanced.

WIN THE TRADE UNIONS

A second major point to raise in the task of winning the advanced to communism is the question of *trade union work*. The point to stress is the necessity to combat vacillation on work in the trade unions. Our own work has reflected the right tendency which tends to down play this essential work and to vacillate on its importance both in theory and in practice. It has taken the form of neglect of factory nuclei, unwillingness to participate in

actual trade union struggles, unwillingness to assume leadership positions in trade unions that result out of the actual support of workers for communist leadership, etc. *All tendencies which have historically denied or neglected the importance of communist work in the trade unions must be combatted vigorously.* The line of the October League, for instance, that the trade unions must be moved to the left, must be thoroughly defeated. The trade unions must be won over for the working class from the bourgeoisie, a definite break must be made in which the working class replaces the bourgeoisie in command of the trade unions. The unity of theory and practice, of the ultimate aims of communism with the immediate demands of the working class, of the economic struggle with the political struggle, are all clearly reflected in the winning of the trade unions to proletarian leadership.

This task must be done on the basis of the day to day struggles of the working class to improve its material and political conditions. Questions concerning wages, hours, seniority, layoffs, housing, insurance, taxation, unemployment, the high cost of living, etc., will play a most important, if not the decisive role in the task of exposing the treachery of the opportunist trade union leadership. However, this task will not be fully carried out if these everyday practical questions are not linked up with the fundamental aims of the revolutionary struggle.

In the fight against the bourgeoisie, the consciousness of the proletariat as a powerful class has grown through the struggle to build and maintain the trade unions. Trade unions, under proletarian leadership, consciously seized from the hands of the labor aristocracy and the trade union bureaucrats, will one day, as Marx foretold, *promote the abolition of the system of wage labor*. Trade unions are political as well as economic organizations. To be little the revolutionary role they can and will play is incorrect. To deny their importance in the revolution will be to step upon the road of revisionism.

Comrade Stalin's words on the relation of the trade unions to the revolution should be grasped firmly. They are a basic axiom for all communists. "For it is impossible," Comrade Stalin point-

ed out to the communist parties of the west, "to win over the vast proletarian masses unless the trade unions are won over; and it is impossible to win over the trade unions unless work is conducted in them and unless the confidence of the masses of workers is won in the trade unions month by month and year by year. Failing this, it is out of the question even to think of achieving the dictatorship of the proletariat."

(Stalin, "The International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist Parties", WORKS, Vol. 7, p. 56).

THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE WORKING CLASS

1975 has been a year of tremendous victories for national liberation struggles against U.S. Imperialism and Soviet Social-Imperialism. The people of the world are uniting and taking up the struggle against the two superpowers.

Important strides have been taken recently by the working class of the U.S. toward the formation of its vanguard party, the key link in moving the chain of revolution forward at this time. Opportunism on the question of party building and the Black National Question has been dealt telling blows. Everywhere genuine Marxist-Leninists are preparing for the inevitable clash ahead, preparing for war, persisting in struggle.

There is no room within our ranks for gloom, pessimism or vacillation. As a vital detachment of the international proletariat, the U.S. working class takes pride in the historic victories scored against the two superpowers in the last year, pays tribute to the many fallen comrades who gave their lives in the struggle against U.S. Imperialism and Soviet Social-Imperialism, and gains strength from the selfless courage, determination and triumphs of our comrades and friends all over the world.

Armed with a correct ideological, political and organizational line, the vanguard communist party of the U.S. proletariat will surely "fell that wild beast, capitalism, which has drenched the earth in blood and reduced humanity to starvation and democratization, and whose end is near and inevitable, no matter how monstrous and savage its frenzy in the face of death."

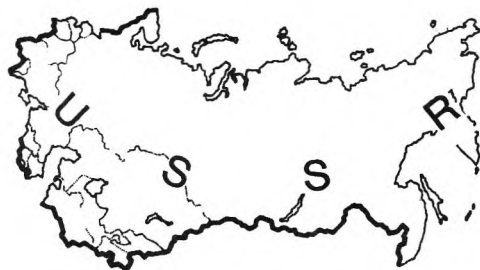
("Prophetic Words," Lenin, LCW, Vol. 27, p. 499) ★

**CAST AWAY ILLUSIONS, PREPARE FOR STRUGGLE!
FORGE THE VANGUARD COMMUNIST PARTY!
PEOPLE OF THE WORLD,
UNITE TO OPPOSE THE TWO SUPERPOWERS!**



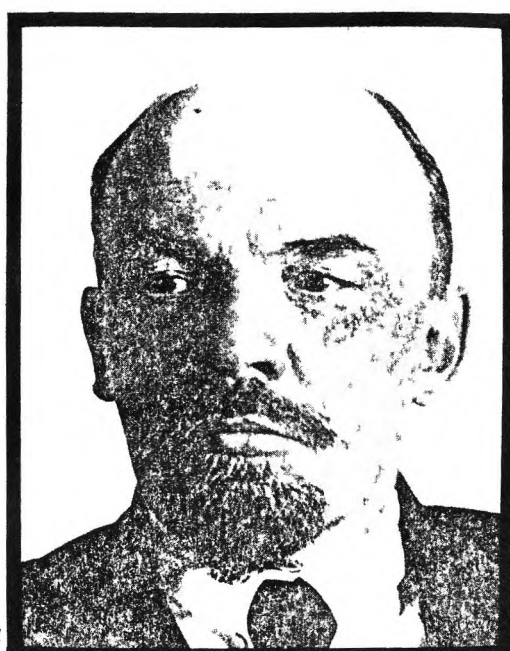
J.V. STALIN

B December 21, 1879
D March 5, 1953



V.I. LENIN

B April 22, 1870
D January 22, 1924



**PEOPLE OF THE SOVIET UNION, THROW OFF YOUR OPPRESSORS!
UPHOLD THE TRADITION OF LENIN & STALIN!**

LESSONS FROM THE SHOP FLOOR



The formation of the Marxist-Leninist party is the key link in the fusion of the communist movement and the working class movement in the course of the struggle against opportunism. "The party must stand at the head of the working class, it must see farther than the working class, it must lead the proletariat and not drag at the tail of the spontaneous movement."

In the U.S. we are still in the first part of the party building period, that of *winning the vanguard to communism*. This means uniting advanced workers with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, which is accomplished primarily through *propaganda*.

To carry out systematic Marxist-Leninist propaganda requires (1) a correct political line on the major questions facing the working class and (2) a basic unit of the future Marxist-Leninist party at the place of production, a factory nucleus.

Advanced workers arise as a result of the objective conditions of monopoly capitalism. It is through concrete experience of the contradictions in these objective conditions that advanced workers come to realize the limits of trade union politics, and seek a scientific solution to their exploitation and oppression. For this reason, advanced elements emerge most clearly in response to correct Marxist-Leninist leadership of the class struggle, leadership which stems from a correct political line being put into practice by factory nuclei.

As part of the development of political line, Marxist-Leninists must seek to raise their particular experiences to the level of theory, to sum up efforts to win the advanced to communism, and to draw lessons from this communist practice. This article is a summation of a particular cadre of the MLOC, as an effort to review how certain incorrect and correct methods of work have held back or advanced the struggle for the party. This particular case serves to draw some important lessons regarding small industrial shops, the labor aristocracy, the Chicano national question, propaganda, and factory nuclei. Most importantly, the summation of this work experience points to the need for cadre and leadership to redouble their efforts to seize political line as key in this period.

I. Some Background

The Shop This shop is a small precision sheetmetal fabrication shop, subcontracting for specialized hardware for the electronics industry. The work force was made up of 10-15% journeymen (including the shop manager), all highly skilled craft type workers, and anywhere from 85-90% helpers (operatives).

Over half the workers were non-Anglos, with the largest body made up of Chicanos. The employees of the shop were affiliated with the Sheetmetal Workers International Association, one of the oldest AFL craft unions.

Political Background The comrade working in this shop is a semi-peasant, semi-proletarian Chicano from the Southwest, with a broad work experience which goes from farm laborer, construction, electronics, to warehouse and stock-work. Working in this shop was not initially politically motivated. When the comrade went to work here he was studying Marxism-Leninism, but was not in a communist organization.

The comrade did not join the MLOC until after having worked here for some time. As such, the comrade's work was not well developed for two reasons:

1. the comrade's struggle to break

with past methods of work which was hampered by being the only Marxist-Leninist in this plant, and 2. the organization's struggle to give clear political guidance in the process of development of political line.

II Divisions in the Work Force

A. Labor Aristocracy

The labor aristocracy is characterized first and foremost by its political stand. (See "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", Lenin, CW, Vol. 23, pp. 105-120) This political stand arises out of

1. *Their relation to production which combines characteristics of the petty-bourgeoisie with characteristics of the working class,*
2. *the disproportionately higher wages, and*
3. *the social prestige of the occupations which the labor aristocracy holds*

The craft unions have inherently this sort of character.

It is the function of the labor aristocracy to promote the "community of interests" of the capitalist and the worker among the masses.

This is possible because the interests of this bribed sector *do* lie in the preservation of capitalism, unlike the interests of the majority of workers which lie in the overthrow of capitalism and the abolition of classes.

The labor aristocracy then, is the main social base of bourgeois ideology in the working class.

The bulk of the labor aristocracy is concentrated among craft workers, whether in industry or the construction trades, due to their material position in the work force (the nature of the work they do).

Historically, the craft unions have represented the interests of this group of workers to the detriment of the less skilled work force.

I. Craft Unions

The craft unions arose out of the associations of craftsmen of the feudal era and were modeled on the *guilds* of that era. Their main organizational principle was *craft exclusiveness* by which they hoped to create a scarcity of skilled workers and thereby give them a bargaining lever with their employers. This of course meant that they excluded the vast majority of workers from their organizations in order to "keep the demand higher than the supply".

In the U.S., the skilled craft unions have been concentrated predominantly among native born, white workers, which has been reflected in the great national chauvinism of this stratum. Historically, these workers have not only tried to prevent immigrants from entering their unions, but in two parts of the U.S. where minority nationalities exist, they have fought to purge these nationalities from trades that they were in. As an example, let us look at the railway brotherhoods.

This *national chauvinist line*, which as Lenin said, is *opportunism in its most crass form*, arose out of the petty-bourgeois origins of craft unions and is perpetuated in the era of large scale imperialist industrialization by a whole system of privilege, bribery, and special position there comes a political stand which represents the interests of the bourgeoisie. Opportunism is simply the *selling out of the long term interests of the majority of the workers for the short term interests of a few*.

The craft unions have historically opposed the organization of the unskilled along industrial lines. The whole principle of industrial unionism is to unite

the many to defeat the few. The principle of craft unionism is, on the other hand, to unite the few to sell out the many. These two opposing principles coexist within the U.S. labor movement within the A.F.L.-C.I.O. (The A.F.L. is composed of the old craft unions and the C.I.O. of the younger industrial unions) by a process of unprincipled compromise and sell-out.

Today, when automation has eliminated a great deal of the need for skilled workers in heavy industry, the focus of craft union activity and strength has shifted more toward the construction unions. These unions which are more slowly automated, owing to the nature of the work, are today the main stronghold and social base of the labor bureaucracy and labor aristocracy in the class.

The specific problem facing our local is that construction runs the show both in the union and in the shop (all of the journeymen being originally from construction). *They constituted an extreme-*

ly reactionary social base for the union bureaucracy. The union's role in regard to management has been class collaborationist. We could not go to the union

with a grievance without having them finger us to the management (usually the same day the grievance was lodged). The union's attitude to the industrial section of our local is one of grudging toleration. This union negotiated a dual contract. One for journeymen, and another for helpers (operatives). This contract gave the journeymen a complete package of job protection and guarantees against job degradation (*red-circling*).

On the other hand, the contract under which the helpers worked was without a seniority clause and had no provision for a hiring hall. This objectively meant that the employer could lay any helper off without regard to how long he had worked there and that he could replace him with someone off the street. It also meant that a man who worked in one shop usually did not get hired on at another, since he possessed no skills that could not be quickly learned, by someone new.

2. Bribed sector

The material source of wealth to bribe the labor aristocracy is the superprofits imperialism derives from oppressed countries, nations, and national minorities here and abroad.

As the crisis of capitalism deepens these superprofits are extracted from ever broader sectors in order to maintain the privileged few within the working class and keep them working for the capitalists.

This shop provides several examples of intensified exploitation of the majority of workers and oppression of minority nationalities in order to cultivate a privileged sector of workers.

A. Journeymen The journeymen had a great mobility in their work and were virtually autonomous in the jobs that they were in charge of. But, this was possible because all the slack in the pace and intensity of the work was taken up by the helpers. The ease of their work was built upon the intensity of our work. Also, their position as skilled craftsmen meant that they concentrated more on the layout and setup of the work, while we actually executed the jobs.

B. Red circling The jobs of the journeymen were protected by contract from being degraded. As skilled craft workers, they were protected from having to do the muscle work and chump jobs in the shop. They were also pro-

tected in their employment by seniority clauses and a hiring hall. In the industrial section of our union, these protective devices called "red circling" were agreed to by the management on the provision that the helpers would not be extended the same protection. The logic of the unions and management is that in such a business as industrial sheetmetal, the employer "needs a break" in hiring practice in order to maintain his profit margin. *The effect of this practice of red circling is to put the journeyman in the camp of the management.*

C. Wage scales The journeymen's wage scale started at (\$11.95 per hour) over double the pay of a helper. This, combined with the journeymen's understanding that the stability and size of their wages was partially a result of the instability and uncertainty of our job situation made them consider themselves as better than us.

D. Overtime Overtime was used as a reward for loyalty to the company and a willingness to speed up the pace of the work. It was usually coupled with "promotion" to work on more sophisticated equipment which required less physical strain.

The National Question

Beside the role of the craft union and labor aristocracy, the management used national differences to create divisions among the workers. This was done by perpetuation of the actual social and economic distinctions among the workers. The main victims of national oppression were the Chicano workers, who constituted the largest single body of minority nationality workers in the shop. The Chicano workers, along with the Blacks, were also the most economically disadvantaged, with no other choice as to job or source of income. The national oppression of the Chicano workers took several concrete forms.

One was the management's practice of laying off men according to nationality rather than according to time in the shop (seniority). This practice tends to give Anglo workers the illusion that their jobs are secure. Because layoffs focused on Chicano workers, the average wage for Chicano workers was lower than for Anglos.

Another tactic that the management used to divide the workers was overtime. Overtime was mainly extended to white workers, and to a few Chicanos. This also worked to divide the Chicanos as a few were given the illusion that they were "gettin' over".

There were also a few Chicanos who were not subjected to layoffs. This group of privileged minority workers were used to spawn illusions among the Chicano workers. Their line was that all the Chicano workers had to do was to work harder and they, too, would get a piece of the pie. Because they were Raza and were putting forward these views, some of the other Chicano workers went along with this line, and did not see the true character of these few and their function.

Chicano Question

As a Chicano working in a shop with a large percentage of Chicano workers, there was the need to understand the oppression of the Chicano people in a scientific and precise way. Is the oppression of the Chicano people caused by the fact that most of them are workers? This cannot be the cause of this special oppression because the vast majority of Anglos are also working class and do not suffer the special abuse that Chicanos do. Studying Chicano history and the writings of Stalin and Lenin on the national question, it became clear that the oppression of Chicanos is based on nationality. The communist movement must develop a correct line on the Chicano National Question, otherwise the division of the class fostered by national oppression will deepen into an even greater division within the multinational proletariat. Through studying Marxism-Leninism-

Mao Tsetung Thought the character of national sentiment and the distinction between revolutionary patriotism and reactionary nationalism became clear. Narrow nationalism can only be effectively combated in the oppressed nation if national chauvinism is effectively combated in the dominant nation's working class. The oppressor nation proletariat must take up the legitimate demands of the national minorities and minority nationalities, while the socialists of the oppressed nation must defend and implement the full and unconditional unity, including organizational unity, of the workers of the oppressed nation and the oppressor nation. *Otherwise multi-national unity of the U.S. proletariat is not possible.*

One of the major weaknesses in this work was an incorrect (almost non-existent) appreciation of the national question as a question for proletarian revolution. This was reflected both in regards to the relation between national liberation movements and proletarian revolution, and more significantly, in this case, in the question of the internal unity of a multi-national proletariat. The "optimistic" error of confusing the material basis for unity of the proletariat with its actual unity clearly was made. *Conscious unity, which is the only kind of useful unity, does not automatically exist, it must be forged.*

Studying the national question systematically in the last several months that work was done here illustrated the need for a program on the national question. This program must deal with the actual conditions of oppressed nations in the U.S. and must give direction to communists in breaking down, not only the sentiments among workers which divide them, but actually attack the material

In summary, we must consider the national question and the labor aristocracy in their interconnection. Both are the result of imperialism, and indeed, the merger of the national and colonial question in the age of imperialism means precisely that the super-profits are derived from oppressed nations, whether they are internal to the oppressor nation or are colonies overseas. These super-profits supply the material basis for the creation of the labor aristocracy, which Lenin characterized as "the watchdogs of capitalism".

Through national oppression the working class is divided, and by the poisonous activity of the labor aristocracy these divisions are further sharpened. Both must be fought against. The labor aristocracy, because a clear understanding of their role constitutes "the pivot of the tactics in the labour movement that are dictated by the objective conditions of the imperialist era", as Lenin pointed out ("Imperialism and the Split in Socialism", Lenin, CW, Vol. 23, p. 114). National oppression because it directly works to politically divide the multinational proletariat, which must be unified in order to smash imperialism. Communists must base their fight against these imperialist creatures by programmatically upholding the genuine material basis for unity which objectively exists for the multinational working class as a whole.

Main errors

A. Systematic investigation The first task faced was the need to overcome ignorance of the problems and conditions in the shop and in the union. Failing to do this in a systematic manner led to an over-reliance on personal observations. This meant that there was a failure to grasp many of the com-



institutions which are the basis of class divisions. More and more the question of how the slogan of self-determination for oppressed nations should be presented came up. How do we present the demand for self-determination in such a way that it neither gives the economist illusion of being the same as "civil rights" nor the impression of just being an "off the wall" demand made by "otherwise sensible" militants?

Specifically, we need to deal with the question of special demands for oppressed national minorities, such as special seniority systems, preferential hiring, etc. These are not simply economic questions, but are essential political questions which must be answered to build the unity of the multinational working class. Without a clear line on these questions the leadership of the revolutionary struggle will be held back by the inability to forge the power of the national liberation movements and the proletarian class struggle into a single weapon for the destruction of capitalism.

In particular, we must scientifically answer the question of whether or not the Chicano people constitute an oppressed national minority - in which the struggle is a question of bourgeois democratic rights, or an oppressed nation in the Southwest, with the right to self-determination up to and including secession. Regardless of which, both democratic rights and self-determination must be given concrete program and content in terms of demands and slogans, as part of a line on the national question.

This work summary by a cadre of the MLOC has helped the organization focus its attention to answer these questions.

plex problems in the workplace and in the union until very late, for example, ignorance of the distinction between helpers and apprentices for the first six months in the shop. Another example is the problems stemming from "red circling" of which there was only the vague notion for the first eight months of work in the shop. Yet another example was the failure to systematically investigate the relationship between industrial and construction workers in this union and in the local. This failure to conduct systematic investigation was due partially to a lack of experience in communist methods of work and to the lack of conscious direction to our work.

This failure to do systematic investigation, flies directly in the face of Marxism. Marx developed a questionnaire of over 200 items which he used in interviewing workers, and analysing work places and factories. And Lenin was known to have conducted such rigorous interviews with workers to ascertain the nature of the conditions in the various factories that many workers said they would rather work ten hours in a steel mill than go through three hours of interview with Lenin, except for the fact that it made them think so much about the obvious need for change.

It is the task of a factory nucleus to carry out this investigatory work in order to lay the foundation for communist organizing and propaganda. A nucleus would need to be given systematic and direct instructions in the daily workings. From this guidance the tasks of the nuclei include 1. to acquaint themselves with the area of work and determine exactly where each worker in their shop stands politically, 2. plan campaigns which should be carried out in order to win over the advanced, 3. get

under its influence all the advanced elements in the shop, and then factory, 4. by its actual practice make the workers realize that the factory nucleus reacts immediately to every event in the factory and country, 5. carry on persistent daily work in order to solidify connections throughout the factory and with all workers possible, bringing constantly new sections of the plant into its influence, 6. establish a factory paper for propaganda and for spreading the slogans of the communist movement among the workers and mobilizing the workers around these slogans.

Factory nuclei exert a broader influence through connection with trade union fractions, and thus the work of communists should also include developing a fraction within the unions and locals which serve the given shop or factory. Through this, the specific situation on the shop floor can be linked up with the daily demands placed on both the unions and the capitalists. Again, the factory paper is the best possible means whereby instructions and slogans and information can be circulated throughout the factory and between factories. Working in this way, the nucleus would serve as the conscious leadership of the class struggle and would best implement the political line, making the fusion of the working class with communism an ongoing process. The nucleus can operate throughout the various periods and phases of the revolutionary struggle to truly make every factory a fortress in the battle for the seizure of state power.

B. Linking Propaganda with Agitation

The next problem was that of linking propaganda with agitation around the immediate demands and needs of the workers in this shop. Obviously, without a systematic investigation of the situation, the task of linking the

higher level, broadening the narrow economic consciousness into a wide political consciousness capable of responding to every abuse by capital. *Correct propaganda develops in conformity with the dialectical development of knowledge, that is from lower to higher, from narrower to broader.*

Our method, on the contrary, was to comment on things that were happening around us without, however, having any political or organizational followup. Making one point about health and safety abuses and their relationship to the greed of the employers, another about high unemployment and yet another about overtime but without connecting them, without going from lower to higher. This reflected a basic tendency of economism on how political consciousness develops.

More importantly, this error held back winning of the progressive elements in the shop as it did not correctly relate propaganda to agitation, and neither to political action. Without mobilizing the workers on the basis of a clear understanding of the situation, it was not possible to consistently draw out the progressive workers.

Role of the MLOC

The major difficulty in assessing the role of the MLOC comes from the fact that there had been a long period when work was carried out in this shop by this comrade as an "independent" communist. Employment was not politically motivated as both this comrade and the organization did not view this workplace as being of any strategic importance. There developed out of this situation the error of failing to systematize the flow of information from the shop floor to the

and conscious way is a definite requirement.

Second, the relatively undeveloped political line of the MLOC on trade union work did not offer the cadre genuine clarity on a number of questions. This clarity is the basis for firmly developing policy in this and similar shops. With progress on the Trade Union Question, the Chicano National Question and other issues, resulting from the deepening of lessons learned in such shops and many others, a relatively correct political line is being developed by the MLOC, a line which will be a reliable guide to action for cadre in this daily work.

CONCLUSIONS

The experience of work in this shop, and other work summations, combined with a careful study of the historical experience of the communist movement, clarifies several points.

1. The Role of the Labor Aristocracy A careful and deep-going analysis of these watchdogs of capitalism must be taken up, if the work of communists is to advance. *Without the smashing of the influence of the social props of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat will not be able to act as an independent class.* This is what Lenin meant in saying that the struggle against the labor aristocracy is "the pivot of tactics" for communist work in the labor movement.

2. The National Question Clearly defined positions of policy derived from a correct stand on the National Question are *essential to forge unity of the multinational proletariat in revolutionary practice.* It is clearly the most pressing question for the unity of the working class. The political needs of the proletariat demand an understanding of the special demands of the oppressed nationalities, the relationship of self-determination to democratic rights in concrete programmatic terms, etc. Also, the role of the labor aristocracy in heightening the division of the class by playing on the real differences which arise out of national oppression, must be combated primarily through the defeat of oppressor nation chauvinism.

3. Factory Nuclei The need to establish functioning factory nuclei to carry out communist work, i.e. agitation and propaganda, investigation, winning the advanced, mobilizing the workers, etc., etc., is clearly demonstrated by this experience. *Developing the shop nucleus into a factory-wide nucleus as the work advances and the party is formed and grows should be an immediate goal of communist work.*

4. Political line is key, theory is decisive The political work was held back by the lack of a fully developed line on several questions. Old styles and methods of work continued because of a *need to deepen the theoretical grasp of questions in order to correctly guide political practice* (See article on Agitation and Propaganda in this issue).

5. The need for a vanguard communist party Communist work in the workplace, like all other communist work, is best carried out under the guidance and discipline of a communist party. In order to carry out the development of political line, build factory nuclei as the basic unit of the party, win over the advanced to communism, forge the unity of class struggle and the national liberation movements, a communist party must be reconstituted in the United States. Through this party the program and tasks of the working class revolution will become realized. *The seizure of state power by the proletariat can only be guaranteed by the leadership of a communist party, armed with Marxism-Leninism. The experience of the working class movement in all countries proves the correctness of this principle of Marxism-Leninism.* ★



two was bound to bow to spontaneity.

Another aspect of this same problem was that of carrying out agitation in a manner that would not bring about getting canned. As with most questions of security, the long-run surest guarantee is close connection with the workers, close ties with the masses. In building a factory nucleus or even laying the initial basis for carrying out communist agitation and propaganda, communists must be aware of the security question, but only in order to overcome the obstacle it raises. In all capitalist countries communist nuclei are illegal. The main way to overcome this obstacle is through close and persistent recruitment into the communist movement of workers off the factory floor.

However, this may mean that the bulk of the initial personal contact in winning the worker over takes place outside the workplace.

We must remember though that the best elements of the class will come forward through the mobilization of the class for daily work of the class struggle.

Because a core of workers was not built, when layoffs came, there was little basis for unified action by employed and unemployed workers and all but friendship contacts within the shop were severed.

C. Inconsistent Propaganda Yet another mistake was the inconsistency of the propaganda carried out. This error was tied to the first two very closely. Propaganda must combine an overview of the conditions and problems with some real occurrence in the lives of the workers. From here we work patiently and systematically to develop workers' knowledge and understanding from a lower to a

organization. Along with this was the failure of the comrade to seek out advice and direction and the failure of the organization to follow-up with the comrade's work.

By attempting to go along with a "business as usual" attitude, rather than developing conscious communist leadership, problems were not solved but compounded. The MLOC failed to take an active role in evaluating the relation to production of the workers in this shop, the role of communists, the significance of the national question, how to develop propaganda and agitation, how or whether to build factory nuclei, and most importantly, did not determine quickly enough the course of work to follow in this shop.

In summing up the work of this cadre it became clear that two principle errors were at the root of the problem. First, was the lack of consistent, clear political guidance. This reflected existing right, economist tendencies in methods and styles of work. Compounding this was the fact that the cadre didn't demand this guidance from the organization. Overall this illustrated that the tendency in this organization was to concentrate too much upon the internal tasks of the organization and the communist movement, not actively taking up the task of fusing the workers and communist movements. This is clearly an ideological question which demands correction. The organization must regularly review all political work of cadre, follow up on the needs outlined by developing definite goals which are to be accomplished in a given period of time, and must move to break with old styles of work. Taking up the task of building factory nuclei in an active

OCTOBER LEAGUE (M-L)

What Are Our Differences, What Is The Basis Of These Differences?

1 Introduction

The task of the vanguard communist party is to transform the spontaneous class struggle of the working class into the conscious struggle of the proletariat to emancipate itself from capital. To fulfill this task Marxist-Leninists must consolidate the break with opportunism ideologically, politically and organizationally. This means drawing firm and definite lines of demarcation between Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and opportunism. Before we can unite, and in order that we can unite, these lines must be drawn. One important means to draw these lines are open frank polemics, polemics which sum up practice and which clearly point out differences, the significance of these differences, whether they be differences of substance or partial matters, and whether or not these differences interfere with common work in the forging of a vanguard party. These are the purposes of this polemic.

UNITY-STRUGGLE-UNITY

The demarcation that must be drawn between the line of the OL and the MLOC is definitely not minor. Rather, it is fundamental, in that it represents the demarcation between opportunism and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. This comes as a result of several years of practice and struggle by cadre of the MLOC, practice as individuals working with the OL, as members of the former Black Workers Congress and more recently, as cadre of the MLOC struggling with comrades from the October League.

Recognizing long standing, significant differences is the basis to carry on protracted struggle. Such struggle requires the stand of unity, struggle, unity.

At the outset it should be clear that our attitude toward the OL is one of unity, struggle, unity. Therefore, it is important to point out the unity which actually does exist. This would include our unity with the formulation of the three weapons and party building as the central task, recognition of the leading role of China and Albania in the world communist movement, the understanding that capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union and the need to unite the people of the world against the two superpowers, recognition and support of the right to self-determination of the Black Nation, up to and including secession, and other questions. These are not minor, but have been an important basis for common work in the past, and hopefully, in the future. However, the most genuine test of unity is not formality, but practice. Because the basis for unity and struggle exists, the MLOC sponsored the OL Fight Back Conference in December, and more recently has carried out joint action with the OL against the two superpowers and their intervention in

Angola. The MLOC carried out joint work with the OL in order to struggle out differences. The MLOC determined that the correct stand toward the Fight Back Conference was not to ignore it, but to participate, and participate actively, not simply to observe. Contradictions are resolved through struggle, not sectarianism or passivity.

THE FIGHT BACK ORGANIZATION

The political line of the Fight Back Organization was to build "one mass organization of working people to oppose the Imperialist system and its murderous offense against the rights and living conditions of people" (CALL October, 1975, p.1).

In short, this conference was to pull together all those who want to "fight back". Some concrete results of this line are the following:

1) On a number of occasions, criticism was raised of the general OL slogan of "Jobs Not War", on the grounds that it is social pacifist and does not even distinguish between different kinds of war. This was

opposed on the plenary floor and in the workshops on the grounds that this criticism violates the "united front" character of the Fight Back Organization. One OL cadre even responded to this criticism by saying that, "We can't bother over slogans, they are not very important." Presumably the OL does not believe that workers can understand the difference between revolutionary war in Indochina and Imperialist war between the two superpowers.

2) In a workshop on mass agitation, (there was no workshop on propaganda) after a discussion in which propaganda and agitation were continually confused, a comrade in the audience presented Lenin's position on this question, and specifically on agitation.

The OL responded, "I agree completely. Agitation is written so that absolutely everyone can read and understand. It doesn't say the 'system' is the cause. It doesn't use terms like bourgeoisie and proletariat, because then we are already losing someone." This viewpoint is confirmed by Comrade Klonsky in the CLASS STRUGGLE #3, where he attacks the view that propaganda

should be aimed at the advanced. The CALL, from its inception (Vol.1, No.1, p.2) was directed toward the "broad masses", negating the task of winning the advanced to communism.

3) In a discussion on the national question, the OL held that to advance self-determination for the Black Nation would limit the mass character of the Fight Back Organization, and therefore it should be upheld only in the abstract. Right after Harry Haywood spoke of the need to call for self-determination in order to unite the working class, the editor of the CALL stood up to oppose the call for self-determination for the Black Nation.

4) In a discussion on busing, a comrade in the workshop pointed out that the proposed resolution does not raise the question of self-determination, and that therefore the resolution was reformist. The OL response was that this "violates the united front character of the resolution". Raising the issue of busing without connecting it to the question of self-determination relegates this genuine democratic right of equal education to a reformist demand.

5) In numerous workshops, OL leadership asked all those present to state their name and place of work. Even the most primitive precautions to safeguard workers were neglected, reflecting a clear social democratic attitude toward the state.

6) And finally, in the closing plenary session, a comrade from the MLOC pointed out that some of the international speakers indicated that the Fight Back must be a struggle for more than just crumbs, and that the solution to our struggle is socialism. Therefore, that a basic propaganda slogan of the Fight Back Conference should contain the demand for socialism. In the course of opposing this on the grounds that it violates the "united front" character of the Fight Back Organization, one Spanish speaking worker rose to state that "Marxism is like English to workers... the workers cannot understand all this talk about Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao and Trotsky." This speaker received the loudest ovation of the entire session. Not a single OL cadre rose to distinguish the great teachers from Trotsky, or to uphold the position that workers can grasp Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

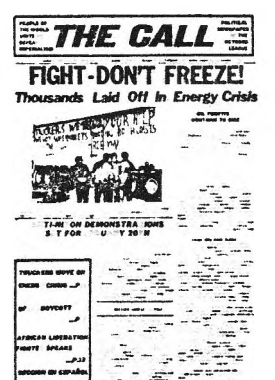
7) In general, the OL leadership did not represent themselves as OL cadre, did not advance socialist ideology and in no way sought to actively transform the spontaneous class consciousness of the workers to scientific socialism.

LESSONS FROM THE FIGHT BACK ORGANIZATION

These examples of the political work of the October League serve to illustrate that the OL does not recognize the need for the conscious leadership of the spontaneous working class struggle.

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gle, and sacrifices the long range interests of the proletariat to a short term gain, they believe that, as Bernstein stated, the movement is everything, the goal is nothing. The OL fails to recognize the higher forms the working class movement takes, and therefore fails to lead the working class at all, on the grounds that communist leadership would "sacrifice the united front character of the Fight Back." In the national movements, the OL takes only a formal stand on the question of self-determination, without giving it any real content. In reality, the unity of the working class demands that the right to self-determination be upheld at every turn.

These and other examples should serve to indicate that the line of the OL merits very close study, that it is not a question of what the OL says in this or that document, but rather what they do. When we study the line of the OL, we find that the episodes reported from the Fight Back Conference are not in any way isolated examples, but accurate reflections of the basic line of the OL. This line is not simply a deviation from a basically correct line on the working class movement, but a definite trend, a trend which has crystalized into an opportunist stand.

This polemic against the opportunist line of the OL is not the first effort to expose the right opportunist stand of the OL on many questions. The Workers Viewpoint Organization issued a polemic, in which there were important points with which the MLOC has agreement. Some of these points are the WVO's criticism of the OL line that the trade unions can be "pushed to the left," criticism of OL's line of unity with the trade union bureaucrats, the criticism that OL promotes bourgeois reformist illusions, and other questions. There are also important points where the MLOC differs with the line of the Workers Viewpoint Organization, and its criticism of the OL, but those will not be taken up here. The MLOC sees this polemic as building on the correct



aspects of the WVO polemic, recognizing, in our view, that the earlier polemic needed to be carried further to reach the essence of the OL's stand

VULGAR MATERIALISM-THE ESSENCE OF OL'S LINE

In studying this polemic, comrades and friends should seek to find the essence of the OL position on these questions. Basically the outlook of the OL is vulgar materialism. Vulgar materialism is characterized by a total ignorance of dialectics and an idealistic approach to society. Vulgar materialism reduces all the processes of nature to outmoded mechanics, denying the self-movement of things, denying discontinuity or qualitative leaps. In nature, such leaps are always spontaneous, while in society, they result from the conscious activity of the masses. As Stalin states in DIALECTICAL AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM: "If the passing of slow quantitative changes into rapid and abrupt qualitative changes is a law of development, then it is clear that revolutions made by oppressed classes are a quite natural and inevitable phenomena."

Vulgar materialism results in liquidating the revolutionary role of the masses as the makers of history,

and in their place, substitutes some theory of productive forces, that is, the theory that social progress is a result of the forces of production, of imperialism transforming itself gradually into a progressive force, or the dying out of class struggle through the development of the productive forces themselves, not through class struggle. If all this seems to contradict your understanding of the line of OL, we invite your careful study of this polemic and the line of the OL, to look beneath the surface to the real essence of the line of the OL. (ANTI-DUHRING, by Engels, is recommended for background on vulgar materialism).

The vulgar materialism of the OL is expressed in their basic tailing of the masses, belittling of socialist ideology, inability to perceive new and advanced developments, and general denial of the subjective factor. This is not a question of what the OL says, but of what their practice reflects. No matter how many times one calls out that the masses are the makers of history, consistent economist work among the masses denies this call in fact.

In attempting to sum up the ideological, political and organizational line of the OL, what yardstick do we use? We have already indicated that the line of any organization must be judged first and foremost by their political line on the central task, the objective task set before the working class in any period of the revolution. "Marxism holds that one who promotes the development of the objective world according to its inherent laws is left and revolutionary," states PEKING REVIEW (Oct 18, 1974, p. 10). Therefore we must first turn our attention to the OL's views on the objective situation, that is, the crisis of imperialism, as it is from an analysis of the objective situation that the central task of our movement is defined.

2 The International Situation

The working class movement has two sides, the objective and subjective factors in the revolution. The development of the capitalist mode of production, and of its gravediggers, the modern proletariat, is a result of the objective factors. The subjective factors must take into account the objective processes of development and proceed from this, from the actual laws of motion of society.

Strategy and tactics which do not accurately begin from objective conditions cannot lead the proletariat to victory. That is why the conscious struggle of the working class for its emancipation, led by a vanguard communist party, must base its program on the true motion of society. Although the objective factor develops independently of the will of the proletariat and its party, it is the task of communists, leading the subjective factor, to accelerate or retard this development.

"The subjective side comprises the processes which take place within the proletariat as the reflection in the consciousness of the proletariat of the objective processes, accelerating or retarding the latter, but not determining them." (STALIN, POLITICAL STRATEGY AND TACTICS OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS, CW, Vol 5, p. 63)

At the present time, one of the keys to the performance of this task lies in understanding the objective nature of the crisis of capitalism.

A. Objective Factor

The October League does not understand the dialectics of development of the class struggle and therefore does not understand the nature of the crisis of imperialism. Instead, as we point out, they view the motion of society idealistically from a vulgar materialist standpoint, with outdated mechanistic 'concepts'. To understand the source of the opportunist line of the OL, we must begin with a correct understanding of the objective situation, and an understanding of the incorrect view which the OL holds of the current crisis.

Since 1973 the entire capitalist world has been racked with crises affecting every aspect of the global capitalist system and from which imperialism has found no relief. Comrade Enver Hoxha, of the Party of Labor of Albania in summing up the essential character of the present crisis, has stated that, "Today the greatest crisis ever since the second World War has broken out in the world of capitalism, and particularly in U.S. imperialism."

This is a general economic, political, ideological and military crisis of all the capitalist states, their structures and their super-structures, it is a crisis of their regimes and alliances. And this great crisis has just begun, the catastrophe will come later." (ALBANIA TODAY, Nov-Dec, 1974)

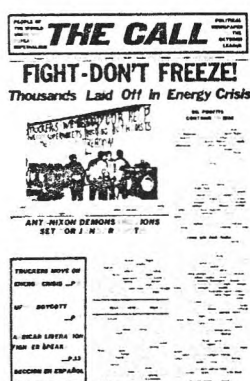
The development of this world crisis is of profound significance for the forces of revolution everywhere. The success of the proletarian revolution requires a thorough going understanding of the

objective conditions and therefore places before communists the task of correctly analyzing the present crisis in all its spheres.

In its theoretical journal CLASS STRUGGLE ("Capitalism is a System of Crisis and War, CS#3), the OL presents its current line on the crisis of capitalism and in doing so, clearly sums up its stand, viewpoint and method concerning the present international situation. This line, in which the OL presents the economic crisis as a classic crisis of over-production, runs directly counter to the Marxist-Leninist presentation of the general crisis of capitalism by Lenin and Stalin, and as a consequence, completely blurs the distinction between the general crisis and the crisis of the trade cycle.

Stalin clearly states that the general crisis of imperialism is a crisis divided into two stages.

"The general crisis of the world capitalist system began in the period of the first World War, particularly due to the falling away of the Soviet Union from the capitalist system. That was the first stage of the general crisis. A second stage in the general crisis developed in the period of the second World War, especially after the European and Asian people's democracies fell away from the capit-



alist system. The first crisis, in the period of the first World War, and the second crisis, in the period of the second World War, must not be regarded as separate, unconnected, and independent crises, but as the stages in the development of the general crisis of the world capitalist system. Is the general crisis of capitalism only a political, or only an economic crisis? Neither the one or the other. It is a general, i.e. all round crisis of the world capitalist system embracing both the economic and the political spheres. And it is clear that at the bottom of it lies the ever-lasting decay of the world capitalist economic system, on the one hand, and the growing economic might of the countries which have fallen away from capitalism—the USSR, China, and other people's democracies—on the other." (Stalin, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM IN THE USSR, Reply to Notkin, FLP, p. 58)

The extent of the OL's understanding of the general crisis is based entirely on Comrade Stalin's address to the 15th Congress of the CPSU(B) in 1927, in which the general crisis of capitalism was correctly described as occurring within the framework of the 'stabilization' of the world capitalist system, in which "the world market, the limits of this market, and the spheres of influence of individual imperialist groups remain more or less stationary." Comrade Stalin made this correct statement, which the OL quotes at length, during the first stage of the general crisis. In 1951, during the second stage of the general crisis, Comrade Stalin pointed out that fundamental changes had occurred in the world situation and explicitly stated that his own earlier view, quoted at length by the OL, could no longer be considered valid.

"a) Can it be affirmed that the thesis expounded by Stalin before the second World War regarding the relative stability of markets in the period of the general crisis of capitalism is still valid?

b) Can it be affirmed that the thesis expounded by Lenin in the spring of 1916—namely that, in spite of the decay of capitalism, "on the whole capitalism is growing far more rapidly than before—is still valid?

I think that it cannot. In view of the new conditions to which the second World War has given rise, both these theses must be regarded as having lost their validity." (Stalin, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM IN THE USSR, FLP, 1972, p. 32)

The error of the OL in this regard is a form of right opportunism which Mao opposed as a "die-hard" attitude toward revolutionary practice, holding serious consequences for the struggles of the proletariat.

"We are opposed to die-hards in the revolutionary ranks whose thinking fails to advance with changing objective circumstances and has manifested itself as right opportunism.

These people fail to see that the struggle of opposites already pushed the objective process forward while their knowledge has stopped at the old stage. This is characteristic of the thinking of all die-hards. Their thinking is divorced from social practice, and they cannot march ahead to guide the chariot of society, they simply trail behind grumbling that it goes too fast and trying to drag it back or turn it in the opposite direction." (Mao Tsetung, SW, Vol. I, p. 306-307)

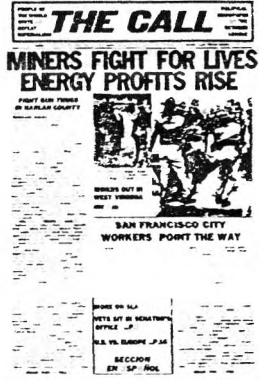
Comrade Stalin makes it clear that the general crisis emerged, initially, through the course of the First World War, but that it was the Second World War which ushered in the second stage of the general crisis. This present, second stage of the general crisis, unlike the previous stage, is characterized not by relatively stable markets but by actively shrinking markets.

"The disintegration of the single, all-embracing world market must be regarded as the most important eco-

nomic sequel of the Second World War and of its economic consequences. It has had the effect of further deepening the general crisis of the world capitalist system... the sphere of exploitation of the world's resources by the major capitalist countries (U.S.A., Britain, France) will not expand but contract. That their opportunities for sale in the world market will deteriorate, and that their industries will be operating more and more below capacity. That, in fact, is what is meant by the deepening of the crisis of the world capitalist system in connection with the disintegration of the world market." (ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM IN THE U.S.S.R., FLP, 1972, pp. 30-31.)

From its fundamental lack of clarity on these points, the OL goes on to present the current economic crisis as a simple crisis of over-production, to generally confuse the character of the general crisis with that of the cyclical crisis of the trade cycle, and to fail to differentiate at all between economic crisis during the general crisis and economic crisis during the era of free competitive capitalism.

"These crises are present wherever there is capitalism. In the history of this country, crisis broke out all through the 1800's. Similar crises



broke out in countries all around the world and some of the biggest capitalist crises such as that of the 1930's hit the whole capitalist world" (Class Struggle, p. 20)

What the OL describes here is a classic crisis of over-production, or crisis of the trade cycle, which is the period from the beginning of one crisis to the beginning of the next. Crisis in the trade cycle occurs as a result of the basic contradiction of capitalism between the socialized nature of production and the private nature of appropriation. The trade cycle consists of four phases: Crisis, depression, recovery, and boom, then back to crisis again. When dealing with the trade cycle, crises are basically crises over-production. With the development of the general crisis, the periodic crises of the trade cycle become super-imposed on the larger crisis of imperialism. The effect observable at the present stage is described by the Albanian comrades:

"The typical feature of the present crisis of capitalism is the further disintegration of the cycle of economic development. Before one cycle of capitalist reproduction has properly ended the other begins. As a consequence it has passed and must pass, from the phase of enlivening the economy to that of crisis, without passing through the phase of economic build-up as has occurred in the classical crisis of capitalism. This phenomenon is very obvious in the present crisis in the

U.S.A. and other capitalist countries' (Albania Today, January-February, 1972, "The Monetary Crisis of Capitalism", p. 51.)

The failure to correctly analyze the nature of crises in the present period is shown by the fact that the OL takes a narrow view of the current economic crisis, does not see the crisis in all its manifestations, and fails to see the crisis as a process of development. OL states that, "throughout the 1960's, the U.S. capitalists successfully avoided the crisis breaking out. But they could not avoid it forever..." and then goes on to cite war expenditures and government spending as the means by which the bourgeoisie avoided crisis in the '60's. This view deals only with the economic aspect of the crisis and clearly differs from the line of the Party of Labor of Albania concerning the general economic, political, ideological, and military character of the current crisis embracing the entire capitalist world, its structures and superstructures regimes, and alliances.

When viewed correctly, it is obvious that the overall crisis of imperialism was not avoided during the '60's, but that the Vietnam War itself, and the means by which the bourgeoisie avoided economic crisis (i.e., war expenditures and deficit spending), were all glaring manifestations of the political, military, and ideological aspects of the deepening general crisis.

OL points out that the present "recovery" is no recovery at all and that it is "a slight upward motion prior to a tumultuous downward spin" (Class Struggle, pp. 24-25.)

This itself is completely in line with the objective conditions, described by the Albanians above, in which the trade cycle has become distorted and abbreviated to the point where there is no longer a "boom" phase. The Albanian comrades' analysis, however, is based on a correct understanding of the present second stage of the general crisis, while the OL's view, based on Comrade Stalin's no longer valid presentation of 1927, offers no explanation for this happening. The crisis which OL describes, as basically a classic crisis of over-production, would normally proceed through all four phases of the trade cycle, including the "boom" phase.

Although the impact of the general crisis, even in its first stage, did produce less energetic boom periods for the bourgeoisie prior to WWII, it is only at the present acute level of the second stage of the general crisis, in which imperialism is faced with actively shrinking markets, that the trade cycle actually fails to pass through all four of its phases. The fact that the OL combines correct analysis with incorrect analysis points to the basic eclectic nature of their method.

The errors of the OL concerning the world crisis do not stop here, however, but continue to the point of misrepresenting the nature of capitalism itself. On page 20 of Class Struggle #3, the OL correctly states that, "... it is the dangers of deeper crisis and the world war which lie on the horizon." In the very next paragraph, it states that the present economic crisis "has grown out of the cyclical nature of capitalism, which has produced periodic crises of varying intensity since the beginning of the 19th century." In this discussion of the "cyclical nature of capitalism", the OL makes the fundamental error of confusing the cyclical character of the trade cycle with the essential nature of capitalism. Such a stand objectively denies the fact that the history of imperialism, especially since WWII, has been a dialectical process of imperialism changing into its opposite—from strong to weak—and of the rise of socialist revolution, that imperialism has been proven to be a "colossus with feet of clay" and a paper-tiger faced with defeat at the hands of the masses who are the motivating force of history.

B. Subjective Factor

In its call for unity, (The Call, November, 1975), the OL correctly describes the Third World countries as the motive force pushing world history ahead in the present period. In its Class Struggle analysis, however, the OL denies that the contradiction between imperialism and social-imperialism on the one hand and the oppressed nations on the other, is the focus of world contradictions.

The Chinese comrades clearly describe the decisive forces at work in bringing about the decline of imperialism since WWII.

"The economic power of U.S. Imperialism, which grew during WWII, is confronted with unstable and daily shrinking domestic and foreign markets. The further shrinking of these markets will cause economic crisis to break out." (Mao Tsetung, Peking Review, No 48, 1974, p 8)

In Peking Review (No 3, 1972, p 17, No 48, 1974, p 8, and elsewhere) the three decisive factors responsible for "imperialism's rapid decline" since WWII are laid out in order of their importance:

1) The perseverance of the world's people in revolutionary struggle in which the struggles of the Third World are primary, 2) uneven development within the capitalist world in which the U.S., in seeking to maintain and expand its world hegemony, has been weakened and the forces of capitalist economy shifted in the favor of Japan, Western Europe, and other capitalist countries, 3) the revolutionary struggle of the U.S. proletariat, which, although it has not been the decisive factor in imperialism's decline to date, will be responsible for the final defeat of U.S. Imperialism.

The "causes of this crisis" which OL presents are the following:

1) over-production as a reflection of the basic contradiction of capitalism between the socialized forces of production and the private nature of appropriation (p 20), 2) deficit spending leading to inflation (p 21), 3) inflation leading to loss of export markets in Western Europe and Japan (p 21), 4) investment crisis as a result of "crisis mentality", arising from the loss of markets and upward re-evaluation of the currencies of capitalist countries (p 22).

The struggles of the Third World peoples are portrayed by the OL purely as a reaction to the tactic of the bourgeoisie in shifting the burden of the crisis to other countries (Class Struggle, No 3, p 28). OL effectively denies the primary role of the struggle of the Third World in the decline of imperialism. In spite of a see-saw approach to these struggles, in which a vague recognition of the proper role of the Third World is given, the over-all effect of OL's

was the fact that the social-imperialists were beginning to get a strong economic foothold in Western Europe" (Class Struggle, No 3, p 29).

What does the OL mean by "more frightening"? Are we to conclude from this that OL views the Soviet Union as a greater threat to U.S. Imperialism than the national liberation struggles of the Third World? Such an implication is extremely serious, needless to say, and demands clarification.

In denying the proper role of the Third World the OL objectively denies that the focus of the contradictions in the world since the dissolution of the socialist camp has been the contradiction between imperialism and social-imperialism and the oppressed nations.

As a result of its failure to grasp the essence of crises in the present period, the OL is led to deny the role of the Third World struggles, the leading role of Marxist-Leninist theory and the Marxist-Leninist party in the defeat of imperialism in Southeast Asia, and the leadership provided for revolutionary struggles all over the world by the Chinese and the Albanians. OL thus negates the importance of the subjective factor in the decline of imperialism. Their discussion of a possible "final crisis of imperialism" and their presentation of the general crisis as simply a case of increasingly acute crisis of over-production contribute to this right error, which, in essence, is nothing more than the theory of productive forces which holds that historical development, social development, is the outcome of the development of the forces of production, alone.

Chairman Mao Tsetung has clearly explained the revolutionary dialectical relationship between the productive forces and the relations of production. "True, the productive forces, practice and the economic base generally play the principal and decisive role, whoever denies this is not a materialist. But it must also be admitted that in certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory and the superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role. When it is impossible for the productive forces to develop without a change in the relations of production, then the change in the relations of production plays the principal and decisive role. When the superstructure (politics, culture, etc.) obstructs the development of the economic base, political and cultural changes become principal and decisive."

The OL presentation would lead to the position that imperialism will itself, by its own motion, bring about its demise. Which is simply the other side of the theory of productive forces of Kautsky and Liu Shao-Chi, which held that the socialist productive forces would themselves abolish class struggle.

In the RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM IN THE U.S.S.R. by Martin Nicolaus, which is published by the OL and represents their basic line on the restoration of capitalism, Nicolaus falls victim to this error by making the statement that he is confining himself to an analysis of restoration in the economic sphere, and is not going to take up the questions of the subjective factor which were responsible for this process. Since he is the main OL theoretician on this subject, it would appear that the OL has consciously chosen that this is not important, and instead, presents a "productive forces" explanation for the restoration of capitalism in the U.S.S.R.

In essence it is a vulgar materialist approach to understanding and investigating the international situation which leads the OL to view the motion of the world as purely cyclical and anti-dialectical in nature and

producing change on a quantitative level only. The OL's denial that the events of the present period are part of a dialectical process undergoing uninterrupted historical development from lower to the higher leads them to base their line on out-dated analysis, to take a narrow view of the crisis in which they primarily focus on its economic aspect, and to present the economic crisis simply as one of over-production. In attempting to bridge the gap between their analysis and reality the line of the OL becomes characterized by eclecticism and confusion.

The right opportunist errors of the OL, rooted in a one-sided treatment of the revolutionary process, are a matter of serious consequence for the communist and worker's movements in the U.S. It is one thing to eclectically acknowledge the obvious features of the crisis, as the OL does, and another to grasp the essence of the present epoch. War, implemented domestically through fascism, offers the only means by which the bourgeoisie may force a temporary resolution to its crisis. The developing situation is one in which either imperialist war



will give way to revolution or revolution will prevent imperialist war. At such a time the development of the subjective factor (the vanguard party armed with advanced theory and leading the masses) is the only guarantee for either the prevention of war or for the turning of an imperialist war into a class war. To deny the role of the subjective factor at the present stage of the revolution, when political line is key and theory is decisive, is to deny the proletariat a clear course charted for its emancipation and to disarm the proletariat in the face of the bourgeoisie's offensive. A correct Marxist-Leninist understanding of the crisis of capitalism is no "academic debate" as the OL claimed at its Fight-Back Conference. It is only by grasping the importance of such theoretical tasks and scientifically analyzing the objective factor that a firm basis for Bolshevik strategy and tactics can be laid. "Marxism requires of us a strictly exact and objectively verifiable analysis of the relations of classes and of the concrete features peculiar to each historical situation. We Bolsheviks have always tried to meet this requirement which is absolutely essential for giving foundation to policy", "Letters on Tactics", MARX, ENGELS, LENIN ON HISTORICAL MATERIALISM, Lenin, Moscow, 1972, p 514.

The OL's erroneous position on the nature of the objective conditions must necessarily effect their position on party building. Based on such an incorrect analysis of the objective factor, the OL's views on party building cannot in fact correspond to the real objective needs of the proletariat, except by chance. A brief summary of the development of the OL line on party building, up to the November 1975 Unity Call, will show if the OL has been so lucky.

(Cont. p 14)



presentation is a blatant refutation of the line of the Communist Party of China.

OL even goes so far as to suggest that the U.S.S.R., as the superpower rival of the U.S., is more nearly responsible for the decline of U.S. Imperialism. Immediately after discussing the role of the Third World, the OL states that "perhaps even more frightening to U.S. Imperialism

3 Party Building

The forging of a vanguard communist party is a task set before the proletariat of every country by the objective conditions. It is the first conscious step of the proletariat on its long road toward emancipation. Throughout the world, this party is the fusion of the spontaneous working class movement with the international experience of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought applied to the concrete conditions of any country. This party must be forged in the course of the struggle against opportunism, consolidating the break ideologically, politically, and organizationally.

At the same time, the party of the proletariat must be formed in each country in accord with the concrete conditions. It must be formed according to dialectical historical materialist principles. In the U.S. today, that means that the party must correctly sum up and rectify the past errors of the proletariat, and grasp the nature of the current situation, the nature of the crisis of imperialism.

Investigating the line of the OL indicates that they do not base themselves on the international experience of the proletariat in party building, do not learn the lessons of the U.S. communist movement, and certainly do not understand the basic motion of the current second phase of the general crisis of imperialism. Pursuing a vulgar materialist approach, the OL fails to take up the struggle against opportunism in which the main danger historically in the U.S. has been right opportunism in the communist movement, and 2 fails to take up party building as the active fusion of the workers and communist movement.

Instead the OL has proceeded to build an organization which is petty-bourgeois and liberal ideologically, politically, and organizationally. The basic error of vulgar materialism on the part of the OL is reflected in their views on the nature of the workers movements and the national movements, which are taken up in later sections, and throughout their views on party building.

A Ideological Line

The heart of the OL position on building the party now, is their view that there has been an "ideological leap" (*The Call*, November, 1975, p. 12, c3, P3) in the struggle against "ultra-leftism", which in turn has raised the theoretical level of our movement qualitatively. At the same time, the OL states in the January issue of *The Call*, 1976, (p. 13, c4, P7) that the formation of the party is "also dictated in large part by the changing world situation and growing danger of world war." (We have already exposed the views of the OL regarding the international situation.) For these reasons, the OL states, the subjective factors have, through a leap in the ideological consolidation of the break with opportunism, now come more fully in line with the objective factors which call so urgently for a party (*The Call*, November, 1975, p. 1, c3, P3).

To begin with, there is obvious confusion on the part of the OL about this ideological leap, and about what actually constitutes "ultra-leftism". In the November issue of *The Call* (p. 12, c3, P3) the OL states that this ideological leap has occurred over the past three years. In *The Call* of December (p. 13, c3, P6) they state it has taken place over the last five years.

The position of the OL on the main danger in the communist movement was changed in November 1974, from right opportunism and revisionism to "ultra-leftism".

Since that time, the OL has formulated the main danger as "ultra-left-

ism" (March 1973), chauvinism (September 1974), centrism (December 1975), revisionism (as the main ideological enemy-December 1975). Within this "trend" of "ultra-leftism", the OL has included the RU, and almost every other organization with which they have had differences.

To understand how OL comes to believe that in the U.S. movement, "ultra-leftism" has been the main danger, while world wide it has been right opportunism, we need to review the logic of the OL on the main danger.

First, their views on the CPUSA. In discussing the degeneration of the CPUSA, the OL asserts that the party was genuinely reconstituted in 1946 under the correct proletarian line of William Z. Foster—though they never state what that correct line was, yet, they state that "Browderism" was never driven out of the party. In fact, as *Communist Line #1* demonstrates, it was the class nature of the party itself in 1944, not Browderism, that spelled its demise.

Stalin spoke directly to the error of confusing opportunism with a particular individual. Speaking to the German Communist Party in 1925, Stalin stated,

"To expel Brandler and Thalheimer is an easy matter, but the task of overcoming Brandlerism is a difficult and serious one. In this matter, repressive measures alone can only cause harm, here the soil must be deeply ploughed, minds must be greatly enlightened." (Stalin, *WORKS*, Vol 7, p. 46.)

The failure to understand the class nature of the CPUSA, but instead to attribute revisionism to "Browderism", is part and parcel of OL's failure to understand right opportunism as the main danger in the communist movement.

Comrade Stalin clearly pointed out the seriousness of right opportunism,

"A victory of the Right deviation in the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries would mean the ideological collapse of the Communist Parties and an enormous accession of strength to Social Democracy. And what does an enormous accession of strength to Social Democracy mean? It means the strengthening and consolidation of capitalism, for Social Democracy is the main prop of capitalism in the working class. Hence, a victory of the Right deviation in the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries would add to the conditions necessary for the preservation of capitalism." (Stalin, *PROBLEMS OF LENINISM*, "The Right Danger in the CPSU", p. 230.)

It is bizarre then, that the OL, after the complete capitulation of the CPUSA and the rise of the fascist McCarthy period in the U.S., can conclude that "ultra-leftism was the main danger".

Historically in the CPUSA, those who fought against modern revisionism have always been labelled "ultra-left" and purged from the Party, as we pointed out in *COMMUNIST LINE #1* and #2. OL never provides us with an explanation of the material basis for "ultra-leftism" as the main danger, nor the process by which modern revisionism was the main danger prior to the dissolution of the CPUSA, then that "ultra-leftism" was the main danger after that dissolution. Are we to assume that the OL agreed with Foster and others in 1944 that those who opposed the dissolution of the Party were "ultra-left"?

Second, their views on the origin of the current movement.

In characterizing our "young communist movement", the OL states (Nov, 1975, *CALL*, p. 12) that, "it was primarily in the struggle against the forces of modern revisionism that the young communist movement was born."

This is a distortion of history. The current upsurge of Marxism-Lenin-

ism since the late 1960's is a result of the two great spontaneous movements of that time, the Black Liberation Struggle and the struggle against US Imperialism in Indochina. It was because of the shortcomings of the spontaneous movements that advanced elements emerged who sought a scientific explanation and solution to these struggles, who sought scientific socialism. In the course of this development, and grasping the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, these advanced elements became aware of the need to break with modern revisionism. The "young communist movement" as the OL calls it, arose as a result of the struggle against the objective conditions.

The OL's analysis of the origin of the present communist movement is another expression of their vulgar materialist outlook, which always has an idealistic approach to social reality. From this stand they believe that modern revisionism has given rise to the development of the grasp of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. This denies the material basis for the development of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, which is the actual class struggle, not simply the struggle of ideas.

Third, the OL's views on the current state of our movement.

OL states that "ultra-leftism" is a result of the rushing away from revisionism, or of the influx of 'petty bourgeois intellectuals' into the movement. As the OL states, "In part, it (leftism) reflects the



social base of the communist movement at the present time. The fact that a great deal of the present communist movement comes from the ranks of the middle class or intelligentsia is only natural." (*PARTY BUILDING IN THE U.S.*, Spring, 1973, p. 8).

This may or may not generate "ultra-leftism". It just as well can explain the social basis for right opportunism. It does not prove that "ultra-leftism" is the main danger, but simply reflects the social basis for all deviations within the movement, both right and left.

Further, the OL does not provide us with any thorough discussion of the forms that this "ultra-leftism" has taken, except to rely on such accusations as "sectarianism" and "dogmatism", without pointing to the specific forms these deviations take, nor explaining why these forms appeared.

The fourth issue that must be taken up on the ideological front is the OL's view on theory.

The struggle to break ideologically with modern revisionism is also a struggle on the theoretical front, a struggle for the correct summation of the historical experience of the proletariat.

The OL states that, "there has been a widescale revival of interest in Marxist-Leninist theory. Significant steps forward have been taken in

the development of communist theory on the questions of burning significance, such as the national and women's questions, the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and the fight against revisionism (Dec 1975, CALL, p 13)

To begin with, the important advance of coming to grasp the "transforming, mobilizing and organizing role of theory" was the result of the struggle on the part of the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization, the Black Workers Congress and the August Twentyninth Movement to break with the RU on party building and the Black National question, not the result of the efforts of the October League. If anything, part of the criticism about the belittling of theory was also directed toward the OL-- and it is ironic now that they should take up this banner (belittling theory) in their own defense.

The OL continues to speak of those who are "constantly baiting the Marxist-Leninist movement about its low theoretical level" (CALL, Dec 1975, p 13), incorrectly referring to these people as "independents". Our movement remains at a relatively low theoretical level, although advances are being made, we must not confuse what we would like to be the case with what actually exists. On many major questions, such as the women's question, trade unions, the united front, fascism, and others, it would be ridiculous to describe our theoretical level as anything but low. A granite theoretical foundation has not been

opportunistic ideas of opportunistic policies, lie in the attitude of relying on the spontaneous movement and belittling the role of theory. As Lenin stated,

"Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity. Secondly, only if it makes use of the experiences of other countries (and) Thirdly, that the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory (Lenin, WHAT IS TO BE

DONE ?, CW, Vol 5, p 269-70)

One other characterization made by Lenin which is an accurate summation of our movement today is "that the strength of the present-day movement lies in the awakening of the masses (principally the industrial proletariat) and that its weakness lies in the lack of consciousness and initiative among the revolutionary leaders" (Ibid, p 373).

All of us should ponder these words in considering how far we have gone in making an ideological break, and how far we have yet to travel.

Summing up the position of an "ideological leap" from "ultra-leftism" in the last three or five years, we are forced to conclude that in rushing away from "ultra-leftism", the October League has not taken an ideological leap, but a three year long fall into the swamp of right opportunism and social democracy. The holy campaign of the OL against "ultra-leftism" has turned out, in fact, to constitute an impotent campaign against everything that the international communist movement pointed to in the US as right opportunism. Impotent, because the OL does not know the nature of the beast it intends to fight and therefore cannot know where to strike the most effective blows.

Originally, in the 1973 Unity Statement of the OL, a relatively correct line was taken. But with the change that occurred in November of 1973, we can trace the degeneration of the OL's line from a relatively unformed yet correct position to a deviation, then consolidated right opportunistic trend on the ideological front. The OL campaign against "ultra-leftism" has resulted in (1) social democratic and reformist attitudes toward the State, (2) a belittling of Bolshevik methods of work and (3) a belittling of Marxist-Leninist theory.

B. Organizational Line

An incorrect ideological line will inevitably lead to an incorrect organizational line. The ideological line of the OL which subordinates the struggle against right opportunism to an "ideological leap" scored against "ultra-leftism", the political line which sacrifices the interests of the proletariat to that of the bourgeoisie through failing to recognize the necessity to consciously fuse the workers and communist movements, finds its logical expression in the organizational line of unprincipled unity, all unity, no struggle.

The organizational line for party building of the OL is the following:

(1) Discussion around the seven unity points, (2) Establish a temporary leading body to develop democratic centralism and prepare for a party congress within a year, (3) Establish a Leninist type newspaper to promote ideological discussion on political line and program, (4) Direct the thrust of mass work against the crisis, (5) Build a united front.

In Stalin's Report to the 17th Congress of the CPSU(B), on "Problems

of Organizational Leadership", he states that "after the correct political line has been laid down, organizational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, its success or failure."

First, the OL advanced their seven program points in November, and by December they announced that "there is now enough of a basis of unity for forming the party (CALL, p 13), attacking those who might want to take "possibly years" to do what the OL accomplished in one month. This entire process of drawing lines of demarcation according to the OL, took one month.

Second, and more to the point, is the actual process that the OL outlines for forging the party. By stating that there is already a basis for unity the OL completely negates the role and function of the party program.

In A DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR OUR PARTY, Lenin states that,

"At the present time, the urgent question of our movement is no longer that of developing former scattered amateur activities, but of uniting--organization. This is a step for which a program is a necessity. The program must formulate our basic views, precisely establish our immediate political tasks, point out the immediate demands that must show the area of agitational activity, give unity to the agitational work, expand and deepen it, thus raising it from fragmentary partial agitation for petty, isolated demands to the status of agitation for the sum total of Social Democratic demands" (Lenin, CW, Vol. 4, p 230).

While the MLOC does not contend that in every country a party program is a prerequisite for formation of the party, in the U.S., as in Russia, this definitely is the case. Today in the U.S. where there exist several contending views and organizations, unmistakably different trends, a party program is the only principled basis for organizational unity. Organizational unity demands unity around program, around political line.

If comrades in the OL believe that their seven points of principle are some substitute for a party program, they are sadly mistaken.

In contrast to the OL, in Czarist Russia, the first draft of the party program arose in 1885 and the party was formed in 1898. It certainly can take years to draw lines of demarcation. The pace of this process must be determined by a concrete analysis of the situation here in the U.S., an analysis the OL has not provided.

The MLOC is "fully conscious of the difficulty of providing a completely satisfactory formulation of the program without a number of conferences with comrades, but we consider it essential to set about this task, believing that postponement is impermissible" (Lenin, CW, Vol 4, p 253-4). It is no less permissible for the comrades of the OL today than for Lenin in 1899.

The second striking omission from the OL party building plan is the absence of a party congress for up to a year after the Party has been formed. It is clear from this that the Party proposed by the OL will function on centralism, not democratic centralism. To forge a leading body of a party without either party program or party congress, and for this state of affairs to continue for up to a year, denies the basis for principled unity, and denies the possibility of genuine unity of will or action. To require unity of will and action, without democratic centralism or party program, is to deny all the basic Leninist principles of party organization.

The entire function of a party congress is for elected representa-

(Cont p 16)



laid, and it certainly has not been laid by the OL. Again we see the twisting and turning of the OL position on this question. After years of resisting in practice those who have raised the need for theoretical work, the OL now comes forward to point to how high the level of theoretical development actually is.

On the theoretical front, the OL has failed to make a decisive break with the low level of theoretical development which characterizes our movement as a whole. In fact, the OL has consistently belittled the role of revolutionary theory. Further, their emphasis on "ultra-leftism" as the main danger to the communist movement, an emphasis based on their distortion of the material record of history, reflects that the OL has not made a break with bourgeois ideology, as reflected in modern revisionism. In over emphasizing the danger of sectarianism and dogmatism, the OL has fallen prey to many of the ideological traps of modern revisionism regarding party building, the national question and the trade union question.

From their vulgar materialism the OL essentially practices economism, failing at the back of events and at the back of the masses. A hallmark of economism is the belittling of the role of theory. Lenin showed in WHAT IS TO BE DONE? that the roots of

tives to abandon their prior organizational allegiances and to forge unity around the program of the party, not as members of some current organization. The procedure of the OL, on the other hand, would form a leading body by uniting various organizations in some form of federation.

A third point to make is that the OL proposes that a Leninist newspaper, presumably an Iskra type of paper, be formed to promote ideological discussion on political line and party program. The entire point of Iskra was to wage polemics against a definite opportunist trend, the Economists, once a party program existed. Iskra was an agitational weapon to isolate the opportunist trend and to win over all the remaining honest elements to the Bolsheviks, not to generate a party program.

The organizational line of the OL reflects their failure to grasp the content of forging a Leninist party, and their reliance upon vague formulas and proposals. The organizational line of the OL definitely is adapted to its political line, the lack of unity of will leads to disunity of action. Political leadership is therefore relegated to organizational leadership, that is, membership on the leading body. As Foto Cami pointed out in THE OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE FACTORS (Albania Today 1974), "Departure from the ideological principles of Marxism-Leninism cannot fail to lead also to departure from the organizational principles of building the Marxist-Leninist party."

The vanguard communist party of the proletariat is rooted ideologically in dialectical and historical materialism and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as a guide to action, politically in the uncompromising class struggle for the seizure of state power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and organizationally in the absolute unity of will and action of the proletariat, based on democratic centralism. The party proposed by the OL offers a crude vulgar materialism instead of dialectical and historical materialism, sacrifices the leadership and independence of the proletariat for reformist slogans, and promotes a petty bourgeois liberal proposal for unity without drawing adequate lines of demarcation.

But the most important test of the class nature of the party proposed by the OL is its relation to the workers movement and the national movement—the two greatest revolutionary currents of the class struggle in the United States.

C. Political Line

The most important test of ones ideological line is in their political line, the application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to solving the tactical and strategic problems of the class struggle. While the ideological, political and organizational struggles are all protracted, they also develop unevenly. At this time, political line is key, and theory is decisive. In the November CALL, seven program points were advanced, in the December CALL, the OL stated that "there are firm grounds among the majority of the young Marxist-Leninist groups and organizations now and there is a plan which can lead to this unity."

This must lead us to consider the OL's "principles of unity" as the "basis for Marxist-Leninist unity at this time." The OL holds that these points advanced in the November CALL are "particular enough to draw a line of separation from the opportunists." As has been often advanced in our movement, Lenin stated clearly that "before we can unite, in order that we may unite, we must first draw definite lines of demarcation" (CW, Vol 4).

Regarding this question, we have already expressed our criticism of the OL line and approach in regard to the international situation. We will not here discuss all seven points of unity which the OL raises, but will rather focus on their views on (1) the trade union question, and (2) the national question.

1. Working Class Movement

The task of the party of the proletariat is to transform the spontaneous workers' movement into a class conscious movement for its own emancipation. Lenin pointed out that, "The separation of the working class movement and socialism gave rise to the weakness and underdevelopment in each" (Lenin, CW, Vol 4, p 257).

Through participation in all three forms of class struggle, theoretical, political and economic, communists seek to fuse the workers' and communist movements, to introduce socialist ideology into the spontaneous workers' movement, while also pointing out the aim of the movement and the road to travel toward the complete emancipation of the working class from capital.

While the working class "spontaneously gravitates toward socialism," as Lenin stated, it is the subjective factor, the leadership, organization and consciousness of the advanced detachment of the working class, the communist party, which can accelerate the development of the already existing objective conditions.

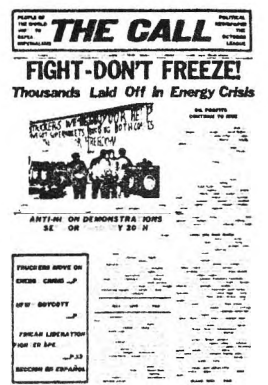
The formation of a vanguard party requires clarity on the reasons for the existing separation of the workers and communist movement, the forms of struggle that the workers' movement takes, and the means to weld them together. Fundamentally, this is a question of the relationship between the party and the masses, the party and existing forms of workers' organizations.

Marx, at the First Congress of the International Working Men's Association in 1866, clearly stated that trade unions, the chief form of the economic struggle of workers, must not be simply directed toward narrow, immediate aims, but toward the emancipation of the class as a whole. The trade union struggle is a struggle not only over the terms of hire, the price paid for labor power, but against the entire system of wage slavery. It is the task of the conscious element to raise the consciousness of the working masses to this fact, to lead the working class toward its total emancipation.

Those who fail to recognize this, who view the movement as everything and the goal as nothing, were ruthlessly attacked by all the great teachers of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought particularly Marx, Engels and Lenin. What is the stand of the October League on the relations between the communist and workers movement?

A task of the party is to divert the workers struggle beyond simple trade union politics, to prevent the economic struggle from being dominated by bourgeois ideology. This is the task of the conscious element, the communist party.

The Fight Back Organization (FBO) of the October League will presumably be the main arm of the OL in the workers' movement, "one mass organization of working people to oppose the imperialist system and its murderous offense against the rights and living



conditions of people" (CALL, Oct 1975, p 1).

There are a number of points to raise regarding the FBO.

First, the FBO is definitely not an organization which raises the final aim of the emancipation of the working class from capital. When MLOC raised the proposal that the propaganda slogan of socialism become part of the FBO, it was overwhelmingly defeated, as we have already reported in this polemic. From this we must conclude that the OL does not believe that a mass workers organization requires what Marx himself called for in regard to trade unions, the emancipation of the working class and the establishment of socialism.

By denying the need to point out the final aim of the movement, the OL is pursuing Bernstein's policy that "the movement is everything, the final aim is nothing." Furthermore, by refusing to introduce socialist ideology into the FBO, in that the OL opposes the call for socialism, how is the fusion of the workers and communist movement made? The OL stand relegates the FBO to just one more spontaneous workers' organization which seeks to influence the imperialist state—rather than consciously setting out to destroy the existing bourgeois state and replace it with the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, socialism. Regardless of what the composition of the FBO becomes, even if mostly workers, it cannot become anything other than just one more reformist union struggle, an organization which perpetuates the ideological enslavement of the workers. In fact, the OL's FBO cannot even fulfill the tasks that the existing trade unions carry out.

The result is what Lenin described as the 'theory of neutrality', "which puts in the forefront the unity of the workers for the improvement of their conditions, and not unity for a struggle that could promote the cause of proletarian emancipation" (Lenin, CW, Vol 13, p 468). How else could we evaluate slogans such as "Fight Don't Starve" or "Fight Don't Freeze"?

Second, the composition of the FBO, and particularly of the Fight Back Conference, reveals something about the view of the OL toward trade unions. Out of an entire conference of 1300 people, there were just three workshops that might be considered trade union workshops, auto, steel and rubber workshops, drawing collectively perhaps 10% of the conference membership. By relegating the existing trade unions to an almost insignificant role in the "Fight Back", the OL denies the already existing mass workers organization which, in the long run, must become the main line of assault against the bourgeois state apparatus. The trade unions constitute the most basic and constant form of economic and political struggle against capital, and are therefore the most important part of the general workers' movement.

In short, by opposing the necessity of close ties between the communist and workers' movement, by denying the need to actively introduce socialist ideology and to fight for its leadership at every turn of the class struggle, the OL winds up by blunting the class struggle itself,



by denying the working masses the proletarian leadership they demand.

Third, we can understand the stand of the FBO in terms of the major slogans that it does advance.

The basic political line of the Fight Back Conference, the new Fight Back Organization and the stand of the OL toward the working class movement is well expressed in their basic slogans, JOBS NOT WAR, JOBS OR INCOME NOW, and the banner slogan of the conference, PEOPLE UNITE, FIGHT BACK.

To begin with, anyone following either the publications of the CPUSA (Peoples World and Daily World) or of the RCP (REVOLUTION) would notice that these are the very slogans advanced by these two revisionist organizations.

JOBS NOT WAR is basically a social pacifist slogan, for it does not distinguish between imperialist and revolutionary class warfare, and therefore encourages pacifist illusions, this disarms the workers by denying the need for the working class to wage revolutionary class war, to turn an imperialist war into a civil war. The slogan of JOBS NOT WAR is neither a good agitational nor a good propaganda slogan. As agitation it bows to the already existing trade union sentiment of the workers. As propaganda, it encourages the illusion that imperialism can provide jobs.

The MLOC opposes this slogan because it promotes bourgeois illusions about the imperialist state (such as the illusion that the imperialist state has a choice between providing jobs and waging war) and thus reflects a vulgar materialist view of the class struggle.



In TWO TACTICS OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION, Lenin indicates how particular slogans, once taken up by the forces to the right of the Bolsheviks, became inadequate as the class struggle proceeded. JOBS NOT WAR is such a slogan, which George Meany, Gus Hall and Bob Avakian can unite around. It does not, as Lenin suggested, reflect "the very content of the revolution" and is thus neither good agitation nor good propaganda. Lenin therefore suggested that the slogan "revolution" be replaced in 1905 with the slogan "FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY."

JOBS OR INCOME NOW reflects the same right opportunist, economist tendency, as if imperialism can provide either. This slogan in no way begins to raise or advance the consciousness of the workers, and in fact tails the spontaneous development of workers' consciousness.

PEOPLE UNITE TO FIGHT BACK promotes a vague liberal unity of all those who want to fight back, a policy of all unity and no struggle. Within this complex, social democrats, labor aristocrats, revisionists and almost anyone else could unite. These slogans reflect the basic stand of neutrality that the OL takes toward the crisis of imperialism and the nature of the workers' movement. Anyone who believes that the working masses have to be taught that they should fight instead of starving or freezing, has obviously lost all contact with the proletarian struggle for emancipation.

In summation then, the OL's Fight Back Organization reflects a complete misunderstanding of the correct rela-



tionship between the communist and workers' movement, and the forms that the workers' movement itself produces. Trade unions in fact are already mass workers' organizations. The OL fails to understand, as Marxism-Leninism teaches, that the capitalist mode of production brings about an inevitable economic and political struggle by the toiling masses against capital, which does not have to be 'built' by communists. It is the economic base of modern capitalist production, particularly the rise of large scale industry, which produces a class in total and complete opposition to the bourgeoisie, the modern proletariat, who wages a spontaneous struggle against capital on the political and economic fronts.

In failing to recognize this, the OL completely ignores the higher forms of consciousness that the working class movement generates, namely the advanced workers, and instead aims its "mass workers organization" at all those who will oppose imperialism.

OL ON THE TRADE UNIONS

In order to develop a deeper grasp of the stand of OL toward the workers' movement, we must consider its views of the trade unions.

Lenin was quite clear that trade unions do not simply represent the interests of the working class because they are made up of workers. They become an organization for the emancipation of the proletariat only when they pursue a class line, a class policy. This was the origin and development of the trade union, as Marx understood them. In the final and monopoly stage of capitalism, trade unions have been captured by the bourgeoisie, who foster the development of the labor aristocracy and trade union bureaucracy, in an attempt to confine the economic and political struggle of the proletariat to reformist struggles.

Lenin and the Comintern recognized clearly that trade unions, under monopoly capitalism, must be re-captured by the proletariat and turned into fighting organizations. One class must replace another in power in the trade unions. This struggle is not one to capture the trade union machinery or the trade union officials, but the allegiance of the main masses of workers, the intermediate and advanced workers.

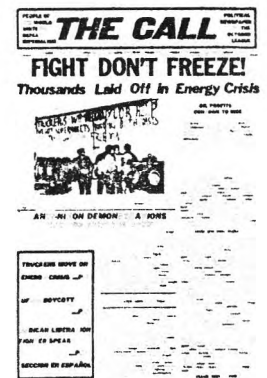
The line of the OL, however, is essentially to "unite with the progressive section of the labor leadership against the reactionaries" (RU OPPORTUNISM IN A "SUPER REVOLUTIONARY DISGUISE," p. 6). OL bases this strategy in its understanding of the trade union bureaucracy as a "strategic reserve" of the proletariat. Such a position reflects a total lack of understanding of the labor aristocracy and trade union bureaucracy in the age of imperialism. With the establishment of the trade unions as centers of resistance of the working class, the bourgeoisie was forced to adopt the dual tactics of both violent suppression and ideological subversion of the labor movement in which opportunist, reformist and pacifist views have been introduced into the unions through the agents of the bourgeoisie--the labor aristocracy and trade union bureaucracy. It is on the basis of recognizing the role of this

strata as the main social base for the spread of bourgeois ideology within the working class that the Albanian comrades clearly point out their relationship to the working class as a whole.

"The aristocracy of the working class and the trade union bureaucracy should in no way be identified with the working class because they make up only a very tiny part of it, and the interests they represent are at variance with those of the working class. Numerous facts go to prove that the working class aristocracy and trade union bureaucracy are integral parts of the capitalist structure, and their posts are linked with the fate of capitalism on which their very existence depends." (F. Kota, TWO OPPOSING LINES IN THE WORLD TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, Tirana, Albania)

The task of uniting the working class, of re-capturing the trade unions from the bourgeoisie and of turning the trade unions into organizations of revolutionary struggle can only be achieved through the exposure and defeat of the bourgeois ideology and the trade union bureaucrats who are the main obstacle to successful class struggle within the trade unions. The OL is correct in holding that communists must work within the reactionary trade unions--to fail to do so would be to abandon the masses of workers in the unions to the influence of the bourgeoisie. Communist work in the trade unions, however, demands the exposure of the trade union chiefs in their role as labor lieutenants for the ruling class.

"The treachery of the reformist



and revisionist trade union centers lays the imperative task before the working class, led by the Marxist-Leninist political party, of waging a resolute struggle within and outside the ranks of the reformist and revisionist trade unions to denounce and isolate the bourgeois leaders from the mass of the workers and to create, gradually, through revolutionary practice an authentic class trade union movement to carry forward the struggle to do away with the exploiting capitalist system (Ibid. p. 170).

By dividing the trade union bureaucracy into "progressive" and "reactionary" elements, the OL serves to spread reformist illusions among the working class masses and serve the social democratic function of disarming the proletariat in the face of the bourgeois offensive. The MLOC unites with the Workers Viewpoint Organization's criticism of the OL's line concerning the incorrectness of strategic alliance between the proletariat and the trade union bureaucrats and holds that such an alliance can only be made on a tactical basis and from a position of strength sufficient to allow the working class to maintain its independence and initiative.

The OL's line liquidates the task of exposing and isolating the trade union bureaucracy and replaces it with the task of moving the unions to the left, which is to be done, not on the basis of winning the rank and file away from the reformist leadership but rather by forcing "reformist forces to unite with us (OL)".

(See R.U. Pamphlet, pp. 7-8) The

experience of the international commu-

(Cont. p. 18)

nist movement, summed up by the Comintern, decisively rejects such an approach to trade union work.

"The Comintern always understood the conquest of the trade unions as meaning the conquest of the main mass of members, and not the conquest of the reformist trade union machinery, the trade union officials...Communists work in the reformist trade unions not in order to drive the reformist officials into the struggle but in order to kick these traitors out of the worker's movement" (Lozovsky, "The Comintern and the Struggle for the Masses", THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, 1928)

and

"The theory of jogging the trade union bureaucrats leftward recalls to our mind the Menshevik theory of jogging the bourgeoisie leftward" (Lozovsky, "Problems of Strike Strategy", THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, March 1, 1928)

The OL makes clear that the "progressive" trade union bureaucrats, with which it hopes to unite on a strategic basis, will be moved to unite with communists working in opposition to the "reactionaries" because of our "deep ties among the masses gained through years of patient work, and our position as unifiers and leading fighters for the day to day interests as well as long term interests of the class" (RU OPPORTUNISM IN A SUPER-REVOLUTIONARY DISGUISE, p 7)

Such a plan is little more than a militant rehashing of the CPUSA's own line on trade union work. In 1966, Gus Hall wrote in Political Affairs I have discussed all questions



from the viewpoint of moving the rank and file of the trade unions. If we are going to make a change in our trade union work, it will come about only by this emphasis. It is the only way we can help to correct wrong policies of the leadership. It is the only way we can move the leadership that wants to or can be moved. Every honest trade union leader will welcome our help in mobilizing and educating his members if he feels it is not directed against him. There are thousands of trade union leaders and activists who will not only welcome our help but will join us in our efforts."

In failing to recognize the need to make a qualitative leap, to break decisively with the agents of the bourgeoisie, the OL remains consistent in pursuing its vulgar materialist line.

Their struggle to "move the trade unions to the left", in light of the nature of the trade union bureaucracy, is the same as trying to move the bourgeoisie to the left, and can only lead to quantitative movement, to reform.

The OL's view that the unions must be "built up", not won away from the influences of the bourgeoisie, that the workers "do have to rely on the unions", leads them to the further bankrupt conclusion that exposure of even the most reactionary elements of the trade union can only be pursued on a level acceptable to the backward workers.

"All support the working class and its leadership gives to other classes, other organizations and forces is always conditional. At the same time, this doesn't mean that struggle is carried out simply through communists maintaining

their 'pure' slogans. As everyone fighting the reactionaries in the union leadership knows, struggle must be waged in a protracted way with caution and restraint in accordance with the understanding of the masses of the workers, even the middle and backward workers" (RU pamphlet, p 8)

At best, the understanding of the backward workers in any trade union is going to be militant trade unionism, if not out and out national chauvinism and anti-communism. In lowering its work to the level of the backward workers, the OL not only bows to spontaneity but objectively cultivates the influence of the bourgeoisie within the working class. On such a basis, the "cautious and restrained" struggle of the OL against the reactionary trade union bureaucrats goes no further than Arnold Miller's struggle against Tony Boyle, and rests content with the basic trade unionist concerns of the worker. Here again, the parallel to the line of the CPUSA is plain.

"Our problem is not to find the reasons for blasting the leadership. The question is not even whether we should or should not, do so. We do have some problems of how to do it. We must criticize the leadership and the wrong policies in such a way that in doing so we win over the membership and strengthen the unions, in a way that no anti-union elements can exploit our criticisms for anti-union purposes, and in a way that deepens the concern and loyalty of the workers for their unions" (Gus Hall, Political Affairs, 1966)

In defending its trade union line and as proof of its correctness, the OL points to its work in "building up the rank and file movement against Abel and his no-strike (ENA) policy," to "the mass movement of workers that has been built" with their efforts, to the fight against the "so-called Consent Decree, which is a racist company-government trick on the workers", and the "thousands of workers who were brought by the UAW Brotherhood Caucus for the first time into political activity". Lenin writes in WHAT IS TO BE DONE? that the spontaneous economic struggle of the working class necessarily exists as a result of the objective nature of wage slavery, he also points out that this struggle spontaneously assumes a certain political character to the extent that the workers are forced into confrontation with the bourgeois state, in pursuing their demands through strike actions and legislation. Left to itself, however, such a struggle is doomed to remain shackled to the influence of the bourgeoisie.

"Of course, a certain level of revolutionary, socialist consciousness does emerge from the objective conditions themselves or from the revolutionary struggle itself, but this is only a very low level, it is, as Lenin called it, trade union consciousness" (Cami, OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE FACTORS IN THE REVOLUTION, Albania Today, 1-2/73)

The working class does not need communist leadership in order to oppose the Consent Decree, the ENA, or even to engage in "political activity", since it can do this with the leadership of any militant trade unionist. What the working class demands is the leadership of its vanguard communist party armed with advanced theory. The line of the OL on communist work in the labor movement is simply another example of their vulgar right-opportunist over-estimation of the objective factor. By putting forward strategic unity with the Trade Union Bureaucrats, liquidating the task of exposing and isolating the reformist leaders of the trade unions, lowering its propaganda to the level of backward workers, and limiting its leadership to trade union

issues, the OL pursues a line of work in the class which bows to the spontaneity of the masses and fails to provide the working class with the weapons it needs to take the offensive against the bourgeoisie and for socialist revolution.

In essence, the line of the OL toward the working class movement is one of neutrality. In "Trade Union Neutrality", CW, Vol. 13, p. 406, Lenin summed up this position clearly.

"The class interests of the bourgeoisie inevitably give rise to a striving to confine the unions to narrow and petty activity within the framework of the existing social order, to keep them away from any contact with socialism, and the neutrality theory is the ideological cover for these strivings of the bourgeoisie."

It follows from the OL line that they neglect the task of building and consolidating factory nuclei, as the pivot of all trade union work, but rather focus on the "fight back" which it has mobilized, encouraging workers to "fight, don't starve."

Because the OL does not grasp that the struggle for the masses is primarily a struggle to capture the trade unions, a class struggle in the trade unions themselves, they do not recognize, except in words from time to time, the need for factory nuclei, which are the basic fighting unit of the party in the shops.

CONCLUSION- ON OUR TASKS IN THE WORKERS MOVEMENT

At this period of the revolution, the main form the fusion of the workers and communist movement takes is winning the advanced to communism-but at the same time we must prepare the ground



for the second period of winning the masses to the side of the advanced, after a party has been forged. It is only by consciously introducing socialist ideology from the outside that the party comes to stand at the head of the workers struggle, guiding its many forms and developments toward the emancipation of the class as a whole. Such leadership requires, demands that the aims of the movement be stated, that "we disdain from holding back our views."

Those that argue that the workers cannot understand Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, will not fight for socialism, deny the reality that the workers and communist movements must be consciously fused. That unity does not already exist. They deny that the workers movement already produces its higher forms, and that the tasks of the workers movement are objectively socialist, not merely democratic.

The relationship of the party to the workers movement is to provide conscious leadership, to point out the final aim at every stage of the revolutionary struggle. Whether winning the advanced to communism or winning the masses to the advanced. In workers organizations we struggle to give conscious leadership, we do not hide our views. In establishing revolutionary mass workers organizations, socialism must be the basic goal in mind, otherwise such organizations cannot be called revolutionary, and will come to little more than militant trade unionism.

With the deepening of the second phase of the general crisis of imperial-

ism, the working class in the capitalist and revisionist countries will increasingly respond in a more militant organized, and determined manner. It is in this context that the task of the conscious element, the vanguard communist party, must be evaluated. At this time, when the principal task in the workers movement is winning the advanced to communism- the main form that the fusion between the workers and communist movement takes in this period- we must develop political clarity on the correct relationship between the workers and communist movement, and the tasks of communists in mass workers organizations which arise spontaneously as a result of the objective conditions of the crisis.

The heart of the workers movement is the trade union movement, clearly the most important mass workers' organizations of the working class. The historical experience of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought clearly proves that communist work in the workers' movement must be focused in the trade unions.

Communists work in the trade unions in order to win the mass of workers to the side of proletarian revolution, from the bourgeoisie. The main obstacle to winning over the trade unions is the labor aristocracy and the Trade Union Bureaucrats. This is not a question of jogging them to the Left, as the OL holds, of moving the trade unions to the left, but of an intense class struggle in which one class interest replaces another in the leadership of the trade unions. Without this winning over of the trade unions, there is no possibility of the seizure of state power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

At the same time, Marxist-Leninists do not confine themselves to the trade union movement. The task of communists in all forms of the workers movement is to give conscious leadership, to seek to unite Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought with the most advanced elements, win over the intermediate, and fight for leadership of these mass workers' organizations, leadership which points them correctly toward the solution to the crisis, socialism.

While mass workers organizations often take a progressive stand without communist leadership, it is only with communist leadership, where socialism is raised as the objective, that mass workers' organizations become revolutionary mass organizations.

Communists do not build the mass movement, the objective conditions of capital do that. We seek to lead it. Leadership means pointing out the final aims of the movement, combating bowing to the spontaneous trade union leadership, defeating the bourgeois labor aristocracy and trade union bureaucrats. It means winning the advanced to communist.

Winning the advanced to communism cannot be separated from the task of leading the workers movement as a whole- leadership which points to the aim of the movement. Socialism is not just for advanced elements, but must become the aim of the broad masses of workers, advanced and intermediate.

2. National Movement

The national movements in the U.S., and particularly the Black national movement, are a component part of the



working class struggle against the U.S. Imperialist bourgeoisie. The Black national movement is in essence a class struggle, the struggle of the masses of oppressed Black people against the bourgeoisie of the oppressor nation. For this reason, the Black national movement is the strongest, closest, most revolutionary ally of the working class movement in the U.S.

The unity of these two movements is indispensable to the formation of a genuine vanguard communist party, and to victory in overthrowing our oppressor. Unity must be rooted in the right of the Black Nation to self-determination and more generally, in a correct political line on the national question. As communists, we must build the unity of the multi-national working class by upholding the right of the Black Nation to self-determination up to and including secession, by giving concrete programmatic content to that right.

The OL, to its credit, has historically upheld the right of self-determination for the Black Nation, and full democratic rights for all Blacks, throughout the U.S. But it does so in form only, while distorting or omitting entirely the necessary content of these demands. The result is that their proclamations remain empty phrases, without material content. They are incapable of giving leadership to the multi-national working class, promoting neither its unity nor furthering its internationalist stand.

The OL is incapable of giving concrete programmatic content to the slogan of the right of self-determination because it bases its support of this slogan on sentiment rather than a materialist understanding of the objective material bases of the oppression of the Black Nation. The OL confuses the material basis of this oppression with its manifestations because of a distorted grasp of the history and development of the Black Nation.

In the pamphlet, "For Working Class Unity and Black Liberation", the OL outlines the history of Black people in the U.S. from the period of slavery to the present day. The formation of the Black Nation took place, "during this 350 year period of slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction, as well as capitalist development in the South." (p. 9) The pamphlet goes on to say that, "it was in the Black Belt area of the South, especially during the period preceding the Civil War and during Reconstruction, that the Black Nation developed a cohesive, internal class structure (common economic life)." (p. 8) The Black Nation, according to OL, was formed over a 350 year period, and the "common economic life" (which the OL incorrectly limits to the formation of classes) necessary to national unification came about during a narrower period encompassing both the pre and post Civil War periods.

A correct understanding of the history of the Black peoples' oppression, the peculiarity of the contradictions between the oppressed and oppressor is

required in order to grasp the material basis for the oppression of the Black Nation. There is no other way to understand the qualitative difference between the national oppression of the Black Nation and the exploitation and oppression of the multi-national working class as a whole.

The OL holds that capitalism is the basis of national oppression, that, "the very nature of imperialism regarding oppressed nations is to continually assault them, culturally, economically, and politically."

(The Call, October, 1975, p. 11) More specifically, the basis of national oppression, "the root of slavery (i.e., national oppression) is found in income distribution, police repression, housing, education, health care, employment and unionization and in the special oppression of Afro-American women" (The Call, October, 1975, p. 11).

What the OL calls particular "roots" of national oppression are in fact the conditions of that oppression, the different ways in which national oppression manifests its vicious and grotesque profile. The October League fails to identify and explain the bases of the oppression of the Black Nation, due to their distortion of history.

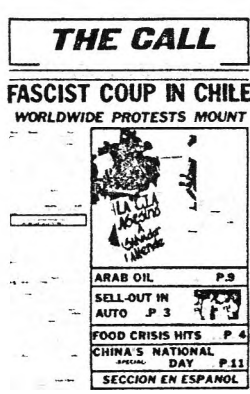
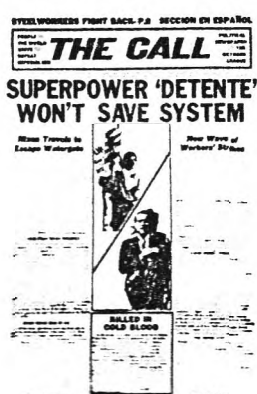
The CI stated that there are two bases for the oppression of the Black Nation. The first is the control of the land of the Black Nation in the hands of the dominant bourgeoisie. The second basis, flowing out of the first, is the lack of state unity of the Black Nation, and the resulting inability to determine its own destiny, much less conditions of life.

A genuine understanding of these two bases of oppression comes from an investigation of the history of the Black Nation, its development and its relationship to the oppressor nation.

The Black Nation was welded together during the Reconstruction years, and specifically by the failure of the agrarian revolution in the South, which would have brought control of the land to Black people. The right to own property has long been the basis for the exercise of democratic rights, the failure of the agrarian revolution, and the resulting control of the land of the Black Belt by Northern industrialists and financiers, cemented the Black Nation together, and began the long history of oppression of the Black Nation.

The OL's failure to understand the history and development of the Black Nation results in a distortion of the bases for, and extent of, the unity existing in the multi-national working class. Because they have confused the basis of the oppression of the Black Nation with its manifestations, the OL denies what disunity objectively exists, and exaggerates the unity that has been won. The shallowness of OL's historical presentation leads them to gloss over the separations in the working class resulting from the oppression of the Black Nation, and to minimize its depth and significance.

The unity of which the OL speaks is attributed largely to the proletarianization of a large number of Black people since World War I. In this way, the OL substitutes spontaneous unity for conscious unity between workers of different nationalities. Even this basis for unity is seriously overestimated by the OL. (Cont. p. 20)



(Cont. p. 20)

It is obvious from the material facts below that the growing industrialization of the South has not resulted in a significant decline in the volume or importance of Southern agriculture.

"The South contains one-half of the country's land which is arable for six months of the year, two-thirds of the land having more than 40 inches of rainfall annually. It has abundant resources. Oil, natural gas, limestone, and waterpower, and possesses 40% of the nation's forests. More than one-third of the nation's good farms are in the South. Half of the nation's marble output comes from this section, 97% of its phosphates, 99% of its sulphur, and two-thirds of its crude oil. It is a section which leads the world in the production of cotton, tobacco, and corn."

(Haywood, NEGRO LIBERATION, p. 66)

Nonetheless, the industrialization of the South has led to (and partially resulted from) a massive shift in the population of the Black Nation from rural to urban locations and occupations. To an extent and with a pace paralleled by few other examples, a large proportion of the members of the Black Nation have, through migrations, become proletarians. The OL duly records this fact, further stating that this shift has had a "profound effect on the character of the national question" (For Working Class Unity and Black Liberation, p. 18.)

This effect has been exhibited, according to the OL, in the "fighting spirit of Blacks (being) carried over into the working class."

(ibid, p. 10), and in the growth of unity among proletarians of different nationalities faced with similar conditions of capitalist exploitation. Those members of the Black Nation who remain in rural occupations and classes, the OL states, are still the victims of the remnants of feudal forms of exploitation and oppression as evidenced by share-cropping, "Jim Crow" and overall oppression and exploitation (ibid, pp. 6-7). However, because the proletariat is the most revolutionary class of the Black Nation, they must lead the Black liberation struggles. From this basis, the OL goes on to elaborate the role of the Black proletariat in the Black united front, in building the unity of the multi-national working class, and in relation to the party.

The MLOC agrees that the Black proletariat is the most consistently revolutionary class in the Black Nation, by virtue of its relation to the mode of production. We also agree that the leadership of the Black proletariat in the Black liberation movement and the socialist working class movement is imperative for the victory of revolution. However, we must point out that the OL has made some serious errors in its treatment of the proletarianization of the masses of formerly rural Black peasantry, and of the unity which is alleged to have resulted from this development.

The OL, by failing to be more explicit about the shift of a large part of the Black population from the peasant class to the proletariat, neglects explaining that the capitalist mode of production in the South, is superimposed on the pre-existing semi-feudal mode of production there. That remnants of the semi-feudal mode of production still exist in the South is obvious in even a superficial investigation of patterns of land ownership, share-cropping, peonage, credit facilities, social practices of "Jim Crow", segregation, lynching, convict leasing, etc. What the OL fails to notice, apparently, is that these remnants, carefully fostered by the oppressor white bourgeoisie, are reflected in the capitalist mode of production as well, in the forms of wage differentials, limitation of Blacks to certain types of jobs, disenfranchisement from voting rights, exclusion of Blacks from unions, etc.

These remnants contribute significant-

ly to the national oppression of Blacks and the disunity of the multinational working class.

In fact, the OL by omitting any thorough discussion of the material bases of national oppression and of the semi-feudal mode of production, implies that this mode of production has been erased, overcome, done away with, by the entrance of a large proportion of the Black peasantry into the proletariat. And further, that the fusion of the working class and national movements has been ensured by this shift.

This is not the case, and never will be the case under imperialism. The remnants of a semi-feudal mode of production in the Black Belt South, the South as a whole, and reflected in the special oppression of the Black national minority, must be overthrown by revolution. They will never melt away of their own accord, or because of the needs and development of U.S. imperialism.

The failure of the agrarian revolution and of Reconstruction as a whole, cemented the perpetuation of this semi-feudal mode of production, and all of its attendant horrors. Nothing less than revolution will destroy this. Once again, it is the OL's failure to grasp the bases of the national oppression in the failure of the agrarian revolution, that leads to its other errors, namely its over-estimation of the extent of the spontaneous unity of the multi-national working class.

This right error reflects the underlying belief that "revolution (is) a simple evolutionary process, (a) totality of reforms" (Foto Cami, Albania Today, January 8, 1973, p. 20). This position, which arises from OL's omissions, as much from its proclamations, one-sidedly absolutizes the objective factor, that is the evolution of capitalism, and results in liquidating the need for revolution to overthrow the semi-feudal mode of production in the Black Nation and the South as a whole.

The MLOC position in no way denies or belittles that the proletarianization of masses of Black people has indeed had a "profound effect" on the Black Nation, although we do not agree with the OL that it has had such an effect on the national question itself. That profound effect has not eradicated the semi-feudal nature of the exploitation of both the Black proletariat and peasantry. The capitalist mode of production has been super-imposed on the existing semi-feudal mode, it is this super-imposition, this double exploitation, which has aggravated rather than solved the Black National Question in this country.

The proletarianization of a large section of the Black peasantry has had the effect of bringing into being that class, the Black proletariat, which of all the classes in the Black Nation, is the only class in history, which when consciously united, and merged with the rest of the working class in the U.S., will be able to end the semi-feudal and capitalist exploitation of the Black Nation.

In summation, the OL's right opportunism on this subject is based in their failure to grasp firmly the material bases of the oppression of the Black Nation. These errors are the following:

1. The one-sided absolutization of the objective factor, reflected in the position that the semi-feudal character of the mode of production in the South has somehow dissolved peaceably from the force of the movement of Blacks from rural to industrial occupations. This one-sidedness is the ideological source of subjectivism and reflects a vulgar materialist view of objective reality.
2. The resultant blurring of the distinction between reform and revolution, and the role each plays in social change.
3. The consistent belittling of the subjective factor, that is, the need for revolution, led by a vanguard party and armed with the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, to overthrow the exploitation and oppression of the Black Nation by the dominant imper-

alist bourgeoisie. This belittling is reflected in the OL's under-estimation and downright negation of the need for conscious fusion of the working class and national movements.

Failure to correctly understand the existing separation between the workers and national movements is naturally reflected in the OL's position on the right of the Black Nation to self-determination and of all Black people to full democratic rights.

The OL's demand for the right of the Black Nation to self-determination is revolutionary in form, but not in content. This has nothing to do with the slogan itself, which is rendered revolutionary by the content it is given. The OL fails to give the demand for the right of the Black Nation to self-determination any content at all. This is

a result of their failure to grasp the material bases of national oppression of Black people as discussed previously. Because the OL does not grasp the extent and depth, the history of national oppression of Blacks, they cannot understand the equal extent and depth of disunity among different nationalities of the multi-national U.S. working class, and therefore the OL does not grasp the extreme importance of upholding and giving material content to the right of the Black Nation to self-determination. The OL over-estimates the significance of the proletarianization of a percentage of the Black population in the Black Nation, they also over-estimate the unity spontaneously generated by that process.

It is on the basis of upholding this demand for the right to self-determination, giving it content and fighting for its implementation, that real, concrete, and conscious unity can be built in the U.S. multi-national working class. The OL's belittling of the subjective factor, the necessity for that conscious unity, is reflected in that organization's failure to give content, programmatic and real content to the demand for self-determination. Because the OL fails to give any, let alone revolutionary content to this demand, and they subsequently fall down on their proletarian duty to uphold and fight for the right of the Black Nation to self-determination, in content as well as form. This results in the OL upholding this right, so vital to the unity of the multi-national working class, on the basis of sentiment alone, rather than on the solid foundation of objective material reality.

STAND ON SECESSION

OL's stand on secession is also a clear example of the failure of OL to grasp the material bases of the oppression of the Black Nation. The OL states that "while supporting the right of the Black nation(sic) to self-determination we, at this time, oppose secession" (FOR WORKING CLASS UNITY AND BLACK LIBERATION, p. 15). Those who call for secession at this time are seen as bourgeois nationalists by the OL.

The MLOC agrees with the OL that communists are not obliged to support every movement for secession under any circumstances, "for there is not only a national revolutionary, but also a reactionary Negro separatism." (COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION, 1930, UNITE, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 16). However, it is incorrect for the OL to actively oppose secession of the Black Nation at this time. As the Comintern Resolution of 1930 stated,

"As long as capitalism rules in the U.S., the communists cannot come out against governmental separation of the Negro zone from the U.S. They (the communists) recognize that this separation from the imperialist U.S. would be preferable from the standpoint of the national interests of the Negro population, to their present oppressed state, and therefore, the communists are ready at any time to offer all their support if only the working masses of the Negro population are ready to

take up the struggle for governmental separation of the Black Belt." (our emphasis) (UNITE! ,Vol1, No.1, p.16)

The essential error is to rob the right of self-determination of its heart, that is, of the right to secession, by separating the two and counterposing them to one another incorrectly. Secession is one of the choices available to the Black Nation in its exercise of self-determination, to oppose this right is to deny the Black Nation one of its options. This negates the essence of the right to self-determination, and reflects the class stand of imperialism.

Further, the OL opposes secession of the Black Nation on the grounds that it would disrupt the growing unity among Black and white workers. (FOR WORKING CLASS UNITY AND BLACK LIBERATION, p.15) Logically then, this unity is not one which is based on the right to secession.

This position constitutes national chauvinism. It places the oppressed Black Nation on an unequal footing with the oppressor nation, denies the Black Nation one of the rights of nationhood, and yet expects that unity will be built on the basis of this inequality.

The OL's position in practice on the struggle for democratic rights reflects the same class stand, that of the oppressor bourgeoisie. By failing to link the struggle for democratic rights to the right of self-determination and the recognition of the basis of democratic rights in land ownership, the OL condemns that struggle to reformism.

The OL states that "national oppression or (the) violation of basic democratic rights" (The Call, October, 1975, p. 11) is linked to the imperialist division of the world and the subjugation of some nations to the control of others. The essence of OL's position on democratic rights is that "the fight for democratic rights is for for equality and democratization of society in general" (The Call, January 1975, p. 15). Certain programmatic demands stem from the OL position on democratic rights. These include regional autonomy or self-rule for areas of highly concentrated Black population outside of the Black Nation in the Black Belt South, programs to eliminate poor housing and health conditions, an end to gerrymandering, or the formal division of areas of Black population into electoral districts that negate Black majority in those districts, and full and adequate representation on the legislative or governing bodies under socialism (The Call, October, 1975, p. 10).

The call for equality, the equation of democratic rights with formal equality in various fields for the oppressed peoples inside and outside of the Black Nation is just not enough. Equality in a bourgeois state, in a class society, is not equality at all, as the historic experience of "separate but equal" schooling for Blacks has proved. It is necessary to call and work for special demands for the oppressed Black Nation and national minority (and for other oppressed nations and national minorities in the U.S.) in order to ensure the achievement of equal rights. As Lenin state in "The Question of Nationalities or Autonomization",

"That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or 'great' nations as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as Derzhimordas), must consist not only of the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of

view." Lenin, QUESTIONS OF NATIONAL POLICY AND PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM, p. 167.

This brief summation shows that the OL in fact liquidates the right to self-determination (by failing to give that demand programmatic content and by their stand on secession), and the struggle for democratic rights (by condemning that struggle to reformism).

An example of this position put into practice can be seen in the OL's treatment of the Joann Little case. This case, and others, challenge communists to explain and expose exploitation and oppression of the Black Nation, and its material bases. It is imperative for genuine Marxist-Leninists to link such cases of clear national oppression to the demand for self-determination as was done in the case of the Scottsboro Boys in the 1930's. The OL did not meet this challenge. In their August 1975 issue of The Call, the OL states that "The Joann Little case provides a chance to expose the real racist nature of the capitalist system as well as its oppression of women." (p. 9) Nowhere does the OL scientifically tie this case to the right of the Black Nation to self-determination. The only reference to this right, in fact, is the OL's exposure of the CPUSA and the SWP for "abandoning the revolutionary struggle of the Afro-American people for their democratic rights and the right of self-determination" (p. 9). The OL is guilty of this same error. The Call attacks the "racist nature" of the capitalist system without linking racism to the material national oppression of Black people. To rant against the ideology of racism without attacking its roots in material reality, is the same as surrendering to the bourgeois ideology that race or skin color is the basis of oppression, not national distinction and oppression.

The OL's stand on the question of national movements is petty bourgeois liberalism, resulting from that organization's lack of grasp of the nature of imperialism. The OL imagines that the development of imperialism can peacefully erase the semi-feudal basis of the oppression of the Black Nation. This results in OL taking the class stand of the oppressor bourgeoisie, of negating the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship.

The OL's viewpoint reflects idealism, their distortion of history, and their failure to understand imperialism, result in OL's basing its recognition and support of the oppressed Black Nation on sentiment, rather than objective material reality. OL's position on secession, which revises the historical experience of the international proletariat, is based on OL's ideas rather than Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

Finally, The OL's method is vulgar mechanical materialism, as opposed to dialectical and historical materialism. This is reflected primarily in the OL's denial of the motion, the development of the Black Nation, specifically, the superficiality with which they address the question of the historical formation of the Black Nation, their position on the "evolution" of semi-feudal into capitalist exploitation of the Black Nation, which clearly denies the necessity for a qualitative leap to occur for such a transformation to be a reality, the OL's mechanical view of the effects of migration and other points.

This vulgar materialism, which permeates the entire presentation of the question of the national movements, flows from the OL's idealist viewpoint, and constantly returns to it. Because vulgar materialism does not approach the world in its interconnections and motion, the positions derived from this method of investigation are inevitably idealist, and reflect the world only statically.

With this stand, viewpoint, and method on the national movements, the OL will not make any contribution, much less lead, the building of the

genuine unity and fusion of the working class and national movements necessary for the formation of a genuine multi-national party in the U.S.

At the same time we recognize that the OL has been able to win over many Black Marxist-Leninists, and progressive elements into its ranks. But as Lenin stated we must judge an organization not by its numbers but by its class stand. There are definite reasons for this development, in the context that the OL has been the only national organization which has upheld, at least in form, self-determination for the Black Nation, and is the only organization with any real work in the Black Belt South. In the context of the absence of any thorough and correct position on the Black National Question by other organizations, and in reaction to the national chauvinism of the RCP, USA and the centrism of many others, it is understandable that many progressive and revolutionary Blacks would be attracted to the OL.

However, the unity the OL offers between the oppressed Black Nation and the multi-national proletariat is superficial, and unless corrected, will not bear the test of protracted class struggle. Based upon sentiment and not scientific socialism, it is very likely that the one step forward taken by the OL on the Black National Question will become two steps backward, as sentiment and morality fail to stand the test of violent class conflict, and fail to generate genuine multi-national unity.

4 Conclusion

In the course of this polemic we have examined the views of the October League on a number of fundamental questions: the nature of the imperialist crisis, the trade union question, the Black National Question, and other issues. What has this analysis shown?

The OL's ideological line attempts to accommodate the long term interests of the proletariat to the short term interests of the petty bourgeoisie within our movement. By battling against "ultra-leftism" and denying concretely the importance of the development of theory - the experience of the proletariat - the ideological stand of the OL does not consolidate a break with bourgeois ideology. This leads inevitably, to the belittling of the conscious element, of the subjective factor, and of the revolutionary role of the working class itself. This 'means quite independently of whether he who belittles that role desires it or not, a strengthening of the influence of bourgeois ideology upon the workers' (Lenin, VITRD, CW vol. 5, p. 383).

OL's organizational line is basically social democratic. By rejecting the party program as the genuine basis for unity, (and therefore for organization) and by rejecting a party congress as the basic authority for the formation of a party, the OL reduces party building to the formation of a "steering committee". This body would lead what would amount to a confederation of smaller units, due to the fact that there have not been definite lines of demarcation drawn, and no application of the Marxist-Leninist principles for the scaffold of organization to be built upon Democratic centralism, as the guiding Marxist-Leninist principle for party organization, flows from centralism (developed through unity-struggle-unity) around political line. A vanguard party of the type built by Lenin and Stalin is based on the "transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority," (Lenin quoted in Stalin, FOUNDATIONS OF LENINISM, FLP, 1970).

OL's political line is idealistic and liberal, not materialist and proletarian.

The most important test of an ideological stand is in political line, the application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to solving the

strategic and tactical questions of the class struggle. The OL believes that a great "ideological leap" had been made, and that "significant steps" have been made in the development of theory and political line.

However, OL's political line, by rejecting the fusion of the workers' and communist movements, by not consciously and systematically introducing socialist ideology into the working class struggle, by failing to offer concrete analysis of the crisis of imperialism and the Black National Question, fails to prepare the working class mentally and materially for the fierce class struggles which lay ahead.

This is why we say that in regard to party building the OL negates the role of the conscious factor and denies the advanced forms that the working class movement takes. Political activity has its logic quite apart from the consciousness of those who practice it, especially to those who choose to be drawn along the "line of least resistance," along the line of opportunism in approaching both the workers' and communist movements, and more importantly, toward the question of their fusion in building the communist party.

Philosophically, OL's ideological, political and organizational line stems from vulgar materialism, instead of dialectical and historical materialism. OL's vulgar materialist approach rejects new developments in the world situation, causing them to rely on outdated analysis and "die-hard" positions. From this they are unable to grasp the necessity for a revolutionary leap by the masses, a leap to proletarian class consciousness.

This has led OL to a productive forces theory of development of history, which negates the subjective factor in the revolution and relies instead upon the movement of the objective factor alone. This will, if left uncorrected, eventually lead to a denial of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, and from there the OL must, independent of its will, step upon the road of revisionism.

The social basis for this right opportunist line lies clearly in the basic failure of the OL to break with its petty bourgeois, student origins. They have carried with them the vacillating nature of the petty-bourgeoisie, revolutionary in so far as it sees that it is being pushed down into the working class, reactionary when wishing to hold on to its privilege. Historical experience has proven that to fail to move rapidly to rectify this social base by first bringing in the advanced elements of the working class, and secondly by uniting the intermediate with the advanced in the course of building the party, will lead to opportunist degeneration which will allow for the introduction of bourgeois ideas and bourgeois elements into socialism.

A clear manifestation of this danger has already appeared in the practice of the OL, which flows from this social base, its world outlook, and political and organizational line. OL holds the view that workers cannot understand Marxism-Leninism. This characterizes OL's work nationwide, on many fronts. This view was clearly expressed in different ways at the Fight Back Conference, from the fact that no speakers at the plenary of the Fight Back identified themselves as members speaking for OL, to the systematic separation of the communist and workers' movements, by the suppression of political debate, on through their watering down every attempt to bring socialist consciousness to the workers at this conference, and at other times.

The OL did not oppose the Spanish speaking worker who stated that "workers cannot understand all this talk about Marx, Engels, Lenin, etc. etc.," because this is OL's view of the working class. The OL suppressed putting

forward any positions from a communist standpoint on the basis that it "would destroy the united front character of the Fight Back Organization." Lenin points out what still holds true, namely that advanced and intermediate workers know and will say:

"We are not children to be fed on the thin gruel of "economic" politics alone, we want to know everything that others know, we want to learn the details of all aspects of political life and to take part actively in every single political event. In order that we may do this, the intellectuals must talk to us less of what we already know and tell us more about what we do not yet know and what we can never learn from our factory and "economic" experience, namely, political knowledge. You intellectuals can acquire this knowledge, and it is your duty to bring it to us in a hundred- and a thousand-fold greater measure than you have done up to now, and you must bring it to us, not only in the form of discussions, pamphlets, and articles (which very often - pardon our frankness - are rather dull), but precisely in the form of vivid exposures of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life. Devote more zeal to carrying out this duty and talk less about 'raising the activity of the working masses'. We are far more active than you think, and we are quite able to support, by open street fighting, even demands that do not promise any 'palpable results' whatever. It is not for you to "raise" our activity, because activity is precisely the thing you yourselves lack. Bow less in subservience to spontaneity, and think more about raising your own activity, gentlemen!" (Lenin, WITBD, CW, vol. 5, pp. 416-417)

At bottom, the line of the OL, its ideology, politics, program and practical activity will lead, if it continues on its present path, to deny class struggle. By denying socialism as a goal, (which in essence means denying the dictatorship of the proletariat) in their practice before the masses, the October League has placed its foot upon and friends to study this criticism of the political, organizational and ideological line of the October League, to the path of opportunism. This is a downhill path leading away from the

heights of proletarian revolution, away from the elimination of capitalist exploitation. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the rule of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, it is also the instrument for the seizure of state power. "The fundamental question of every revolution is the question of power." (Lenin)

We invite the OL and all comrades correct what is incorrect, and to deepen what is correct. We invite the October League (M-L) to reply to this criticism in a Marxist-Leninist manner, in the spirit of criticism and self-criticism. While the criticism presented here of the OL is very serious, it is raised in order to advance the struggle for the party, to repudiate errors, and unite around a correct ideological and political line. While Marxist-Leninists take the stand that against opportunism, struggle is absolute, toward the OL as an organization, the MLOC takes the stand of unity, struggle, unity. We hope that the OL will take such a stand as well.

The forging of a genuine vanguard communist party by the most advanced detachment of the working class will constitute the most significant step taken by the working class in its historic mission for emancipation in over forty years. It is nothing short of a declaration of war against the bourgeoisie.

To forge a party which denies the advanced forms of the working class movement which arise as a result of the capitalist mode of production itself, which holds that the productive forces of imperialism can resolve the contradictions between imperialism and the exploited and oppressed peoples of the world, which relies upon sentiment and not a concrete analysis of concrete conditions, which seeks to unite with certain sections of the trade unions bureaucracy and begins to work in the absence of a party program and a party congress--such a party would begin mutiny on its knees.

"Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers only from without" (WHAT IS TO BE DONE?, p. 422). Without holding to this principle of Marxism-Leninism there will be no communist party. The OL denies both the working class's ability to grasp Marxism-Leninism and Marxism-Leninism's ability to mobilize the masses by speaking to their needs. This is the outcome of the essence of their political practice, the real proof of the OL's political line.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 8!

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MUST
BECOME A MEANS OF TRANSFORMING
THE WORKING WOMEN AND PEASANT
WOMEN FROM A RESERVE OF THE
WORKING CLASS INTO AN ACTIVE
ARMY OF THE EMANCIPATION MOVE-
MENT OF THE PROLETARIAT

LONG LIVE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S
DAY!

JOSEPH STALIN



The Victory of Revolution is Inevitable

Revolution opens and defines the road of the development of present day human society

Under the title "Revolution opens and defines the road of the development of the present day human society" the newspaper **Zeri i Popullit** publishes an editorial today which reads among other things

The years one after another bring about continuous changes, always in favour of freedom and socialism and in disfavour of slavery, aggressive imperialism and the two superpowers. The year just concluded proves this. 1975 was the year of the great class battles of the proletariat. It was a year of victories for the peoples fighting for liberation and for all the revolutionary forces. It was the year of irreparable defeats for U.S.-led imperialism, of further discredit of Russian social-imperialism, of the downward course of their oppressive and exploiting system and the further deepening of the inter-imperialist contradictions. This year once more proved the conclusion Comrade Enver Hoxha drew at the 6th Congress of the Party, "The historic initiative has passed completely into the hands of the working class and the peoples. The revolution opens and defines the road of the development of the present day human society."

The People's Republic of Albania marches always forward triumphantly on the road of revolution and socialism, towards new victories in all fields. It ushers in the new year with a higher prestige than ever, with comrades and brothers of the same barricade with numerous friends, side by side with the revolutionary peoples in the struggle against U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism. All this has its foundation in the revolutionary foreign policy of the People's Republic of Albania, in the immortal doctrine of Marxism-Leninism and in the principles of proletarian internationalism, as defended and consistently implemented in our foreign policy. It has its foundation in the revolutionary courage of our Party, in the sincerity and frankness of our foreign policy. This is the road socialist Albania is following. This has been so and will always be so. Our people and Party have always met courageously with the most difficult situations. They have bravely had their say, intrepid in the face of everybody or everything. "Our People's Republic" Comrade Enver Hoxha has stressed, never lowers its banner either in the face of blackmail and fear nor in the face of the ruble and the dollar. Our Party and the People's Republic of Albania have continued and consistently continues the principled struggle against the two most ferocious and shrewd enemies of mankind, U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, who are responsible for all the evils.

Socialist Albania, in revolutionary struggle in defence of the purity of Marxism-Leninism, for the cause of socialism, freedom, progress and real democracy in all the world, stands side by side with the great People's China and all the revolutionary and democratic world forces. The fraternal Chinese people too, celebrate the new year in the atmosphere of great revolutionary enthusiasm. They have

mobilized entirely to carry into effect the historic decisions of the 10th Congress of their Communist Party and the important tasks of the 1st Session of the 4th National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, which approved the new constitution. They have fulfilled and overfulfilled the plans of industrial and agricultural production, strengthened further the defence capacity of their homeland and are marching onward, determined to put into practice the brilliant perspectives on the road of revolution and socialism. During 1975 the powerful movement of the multi-million masses to criticise the reactionary and bourgeois-revisionist ideas of Confucius and Lin Biao was further advanced. The National Conference on Agriculture took place, and launched the slogan for the creation of Tachai-type agricultural districts all over China. Two earth satellites were launched successfully, one of which landed again, etc. The great People's China is mounting new heights. Today, it is a powerful socialist country, with modern industry and advanced agriculture with the science and technology of a high world level and a defence capacity able to smash every aggressor.

For the Marxist-Leninist Parties it was a year of revolutionary vigour which made them more powerful ideologically and organisationally.

1975 through numerous events in the world, proved the correctness of the principled foreign policy of our Party; the editorial article stresses.

During 1975 the power of the bourgeoisie, gripped by deep economic-financial crisis, accentuated violence, terror, arrests and mass lay-offs displaying shrewdness and demagoguery. This made 1975 the year of big class clashes. It was once more seen that the "class peace" so clamorously preached by the bourgeois ideologists and the modern revisionists is nothing but a myth which has nothing in common with reality.

Under the present conditions of aggravated class contradictions and the new impetus the struggle of the proletariat has assumed, the treacherous role of the revisionist parties came especially to the fore.

1975 was the year of great victories of the national-liberation struggles. It was a year of victories of the struggle of the peoples of sovereign countries against U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism in defence of their freedom, independence and sovereign rights for a free and independent development. This year proved once more the thesis of our Party that "the people's struggle can cope successfully with the aggression of the big imperialist power."

The heroic Vietnamese and Cambodian people smashed the U.S. imperialist aggressors and their lackeys on the battle field and caused them one of their gravest defeats. The U.S. imperialists also had the continuous aid of the Moscow social-imperialists but to no avail.

In Africa the dark forces of colonialism

suffered defeats by the liberation struggle of the peoples of that continent.

The Zionist aggressors do not feel themselves secure for a single day because of the attacks of the Palestinian partisans.

The peoples of the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America have risen courageously in struggle against the policy of aggression and economic expansion, of imperialist plunder and exploitation, in defence of freedom, independence and sovereign rights. They have risen in struggle for the security of their economic independence and the exertion of complete sovereignty over their national riches and raw materials. They have forcefully exposed their plunderers, the imperialist powers and first and foremost the two imperialist superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union which are the most responsible for their grave situation.

The article reads further on that surrounded by the hatred of the oppressed peoples, under the unceasing attacks of the forces of revolution and of national liberation, democracy and social progress, the imperialists, the social-imperialists and all reaction are suffering successive failures, which further aggravates the economic, political and social crisis in the imperialist-revisionist world, first and foremost in the USA and the Soviet Union. "Both superpowers," Comrade Enver Hoxha has stressed, "are in a great economic, cultural and spiritual crisis. Their regimes and ideologies are plunged in corruption."

In such a situation of general crisis, 1975 further aggravated the inter-imperialist contradictions between the capitalist countries, between various political, economic and military groupings, between them and the two superpowers, as well as between U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism.

The Soviet Union and the other revisionist countries are unceasingly corroded by numerous difficulties both internal and external antagonistic contradictions. The new Kremlin tsars oppress and nourish the peoples of the Soviet Union with aggressive nationalism and Great Russian chauvinism and keep occupied and under their jack boot the peoples of the so-called ally countries. U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism are carrying out a frontal attack against all the world's peoples and are trying to divide the world into spheres of influence. They want to introduce their claws to every corner of the globe. "Their be-all and end-all" Comrade Enver Hoxha has stressed "is to dominate the world, the peoples and states."

In order to achieve their aggressive aims as easily as possible, to camouflage the dangers their rivalry and deals are fraught with, they try to create the euphoria of a false peace and advertise their worn out slogans on "detente", "collaboration and security", "disarmament", etc. Through these slogans they want to lull the peoples to sleep, to undermine their vigilance, to weaken and quench their opposition to the two superpowers. The Helsinki Conference summoned clamorously, showed from the first days following its conclusion, that it

was a conference of European insecurity. The Helsinki Conference commenced and ended as a Soviet-U.S. plot. It was hatched up by the two superpowers not because they were concerned with the destiny of peace and security in Europe, but because of their hegemonistic aims and designed to legalize their spheres of influence and privileges in various European countries, to compel the participating countries to recognize their role of arbiter in all the European question.

The other Soviet or U.S. "initiatives" too, are of such a nature. The two superpowers make use of every occasion to speak on disarmament, while their military budgets increase. They speak on detente, but through their concrete activity they do the opposite.

They pose as the best mediators of peace, but the offspring of imperialism — Israeli Zionists, still keep occupied Arab territories. The Palestinian people are killed by the U.S. bombs dropped from the U.S. aircraft and directed by pilots supplied by the Soviet Union. They pose as supporters of the new states, but in reality they instigate splitism and interfere by implanting fire and death, as they are doing in Angola. They pose as generous beings ready to offer "aid", but in reality their aims are chains of neo-colonialism for plundering of national riches of other countries and peoples. The tension and insecurity reigning today in the world, are the deeds of U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism.

The events of the year 1975 showed that the two imperialist superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union, remain the two most savage and dangerous enemies of the peoples. The events of that year also tore the mask off all the revisionist theories about "peaceful roads of transition to socialism", exposed their demagoguery on "peaceful coexistence", "class reconciliation", "detente", etc. The triumphant struggle of various peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America showed best of all the falsity of the bourgeois revisionist pacifist theories. They taught the world's peoples that the sole correct road for the realisation of their national aspirations, to be free and independent, is guaranteed only through the determined and uncompromised struggle against the aggression of the two imperialist superpowers, the USA and the Soviet Union, against the other colonialist and neo-colonialist forces. "The golden age" of the imperialist aggressors, social-imperialists and reaction of all hues, has ended. Time works at present for the peoples, for revolution, the victory of which is inevitable. The newspaper **Zeri i Popullit** writes in conclusion the future belongs to socialism, whereas imperialism and social-imperialism plunged in the swamp of general crisis and gripped by the struggle of the peoples and revolutionary forces of the world are doomed to failure.

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WINNING THE ADVANCED THROUGH PROPAGANDA

"Socialism is built by the masses, The Party makes them conscious " It is through communist leadership that the masses become conscious of their tasks. Leadership is given through the unity of theory and practice, through knowing the world and changing it. In the course of uniting Marxist-Leninists and the advanced to communism we have put forward that "political line is key, theory is decisive " Unity of Marxist-Leninists and advanced workers will be forged on the basis of the political line which mobilizes the masses in the class struggle and the struggle to build the vanguard communist party. The political line of the party is carried to the working class through propaganda and agitation, but the working class must learn the truth of this line through its own experience

Propaganda, which is a form of political education, is the main tool of communists in winning the advanced

"As long as it was (and in as much as it still is) a question of winning the proletariat's vanguard over to the side of communism, priority went and still goes to propaganda work." Lenin, LCW, Vol. 31, p 93-94 "Left-wing" Communism

Propaganda is the primary form of political education in a period, (such as today in our revolution) in which winning the advanced to communism must be done. At the same time, agitation serves to directly mobilize the masses in the struggle through which the advanced elements of the class come forth. Advanced workers are not primarily identified through discussions on the shop floor. They come forward in the heat of the actual struggle. It is at the advanced sector, as Lenin said, that we should aim the bulk of our propaganda work.

tions, struggle against opportunism, and promote the organizing, mobilizing, and transforming role of advanced theory as a guide to action. It is aimed at the communist movement so as to help supply the basis for analysing concrete conditions. Ultimately the task of such a journal would be to act as a medium for the exchange of experiences, in elaborating questions of program, to generally systematize educational work in investigation and bibliographical material, and to suitably utilize the results of Marxist-Leninist investigation. In taking up the class struggle on the theoretical front, COMMUNIST LINE seeks to lay the foundation for propaganda and agitation, for a comprehensive education of the vanguard of the class. As Marx said, *in order to educate, the educator must first be educated.*

Propaganda and agitation are a unity, a two-edged sword for the defeat of bourgeois ideology, bourgeois interest. *Propaganda must 'present many ideas', so many indeed that they will be understood as a whole only by a (comparatively) few persons " Agitation, on the other hand, "takes as an illustration a fact that is most widely known and outstanding and utilising this fact will direct all efforts to presenting a single idea to the 'masses' "* Lenin, LCW, Vol. 5, p. 409-410 What is to be Done?

Agitation and propaganda must supplement one another, neither must be put off at the expense of the other or confused with the other. Agitation must take as its starting point the immediate experiences, needs, and demands of the masses, and must illustrate questions vividly and clearly without confusing and complicating these questions with long-winded explanations and theo-

raised the right of self-determination for the Black Nation. At the same time agitational work, based on the same theme, was used to mobilize mass support throughout the country. The Scottsboro case won many advanced Black workers and sharecroppers to communism. Propaganda and agitation were interrelated to build the revolutionary movement, the leadership of the class and the unity of the proletariat.

Slogans are an integral part of agit/prop work. The strategy and tactics of revolutionary struggle are served by slogans. This does not mean that propaganda and strategy are to be confused, or agitation and tactics. But it does mean that skillfully developing slogans to serve the struggle comes out of moving the masses by strategy and tactics forward through agitation and propaganda. For instance, a propaganda slogan is an educational slogan. A good example is described by Comrade Stalin in "The Political Strategy and Tactics of the Russian Communists", WORKS, Vol. 5, where he describes how the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" develops in conformity to Lenin's statement that "every particular slogan must be deduced from the totality of specific features of a definite political situation" ("On Slogans," Lenin, CW, Vol. 25, p. 183)

Propaganda and agitation must react to everything that arouses the masses, and which interests the people. The communist movement, if it is to be successful in the fusion with the workers' movement, must develop all its members as propagandists. As Mao Tsetung said: Who are our propagandists? They include not only the teachers, the journalists and the writers, but all our cadre working in every field. Whenever a person speaks

**"SOCIALISM IS BUILT BY THE MASSES;
THE PARTY MAKES THEM CONSCIOUS"**

Enver Hoxha

It is through the factory nuclei, the basic unit for communist work and of the communist party, that propaganda and agitation are carried out. In order to fuse communism with advanced workers. Factory nuclei must be able to respond to every level of situation, from those on the shop floor, to the defense of the dictatorship of the proletariat in existing socialist countries. Through propaganda, and other forms of political education, the factory nuclei will expand by making advanced workers into communists. This is what fusing communism with the working class essentially comes to. Factory nuclei must expand in this way in order to fulfill their ultimate mission as the basic unit for the seizure of state power.

Earlier we said that theory is decisive, also meaning that it is on the theoretical front of the class struggle that we must wage the decisive battle today. *The struggle on the theoretical front comes down to the most fundamental question of class stand.* Since theory is the summation of the historical experience of the proletariat, we are talking about a struggle over the correct understanding of the historical past and its development to the present. Without a concrete analysis of the objective situation, propaganda will be based on a spur of the moment explanation. Theory is this analysis, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought applied to the concrete situation. A concrete analysis of concrete conditions is the basis for propaganda and agitation.

COMMUNIST LINE, the theoretical journal of the MLOC, reflects the line that "political line is key, theory is decisive." In it, we seek to present a concrete analysis of concrete condi-

retical constructions. Propaganda, which is presented as clearly as agitation, must show that these everyday experiences are no chance events or accidents, that they are a symptom of capitalism, and that the endless repetition of such things can only be prevented by the destruction of capitalism and the building of socialism.

Propaganda and agitation must be linked constantly to political action. Along with being concrete, and giving clarification, propaganda and agitation will be proven to be correct in the course of the actual political struggle. They must, in their best relationship, serve one another. We must always supplement agitation with propaganda, correctly interrelating them and developing them both to perfection.

Agitation must accompany propaganda by instilling one sole idea into many people, calling attention to one injustice or problem, dramatically moving the masses to act on their existing indignation, awakening it to the level of socialist consciousness. Propaganda instills many ideas into a small number of those who have been mobilized, by explaining in an all round manner the very same incident. Propaganda deepens an already awakened consciousness, by reflecting the interests of the proletariat, by linking the actions of the masses directly against their own illusions, by bringing to the forefront the knowledge that the proletariat has the destiny of the world in their hands.

An example of the correct relationship between agitation and propaganda was the work around the Scottsboro case in the '30's. In defending the Scottsboro case the C P's propaganda showed that the case against the nine framed Blacks was a manifestation of national oppression. Through this the C P

to others, that is propaganda. And unless one is dumb, one is bound to speak to others. (Mao, "Oppose the Party 'Eight-Legged Essay'", FLP, 1960, p. 13)

UNITE!, the political organ of the MLOC, is aimed at advanced workers and Marxist-Leninists--in order to serve the central task of party building. Through a relatively high level of theoretical presentation, that is by primarily presenting propaganda, UNITE! is a weapon to aid in the fusion of the communist and worker's movements. UNITE! does not focus on topical, passing events, but seeks to raise events which express the class struggle to the level of theory. It is not a mass paper--not because we do not feel such a paper is important--but because we believe the focus must be in supplying communists with propaganda for winning over the advanced, and advanced workers with the understanding which they demand to know. UNITE! is primarily a propagandists' tool, presented in a popular style, which can serve political action.

Every communist must master Marxist-Leninist theory, must base propaganda on an objective analysis of the situation and link this propaganda continually with agitation in the course of the class struggle. Our tasks are great, and so are our possibilities. To carry out these tasks and exhaust these possibilities we must raise and strengthen our propaganda to the highest possible level. At the same time we must develop a superior form of agitation. Both will serve to build the communist party in the fusion of the workers' and communist movements, breaking down the walls of capitalism, and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(Cont. from p.28)

The second error of the MLOC was in considering what Stalin held to be "characteristics" or "elements" of the theory of the nation as criteria. This is not a semantic difference, as we will demonstrate.

Stalin is clear that "none of the above characteristics is by itself sufficient to define a nation. On the other hand, it is sufficient for a single one of these characteristics to be absent and the nation ceases to be a nation" (Stalin, COLLECTED WORKS, Vol 2, p.307). Here Stalin is clear that the formation and existence of a nation requires all four elements to be present, but not in some abstract textbook definition as the term "criteria" implies. In approaching concrete reality, we must first rely upon the international experience of the proletarian movement summed up, that is, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. We must not launch an investigation of either the Black Belt South or the Southwest with the aim of identifying each of the four features as an absolute quality which must be present. It is in relation to the basic theory of a

took up the investigation of the Black National Question.

The MLOC emerged out of the struggle against the right danger in the Black Workers Congress. One of the chauvinist lines that the right opportunists took was that the Black Workers Congress had done insufficient investigation to uphold the Communist International's 1928 and 1930 Resolutions, and that we needed to prove them again, today. The correct line upheld by the comrades who became the MLOC was that we must stand on the international experience of the proletariat. *We upheld that in regard to the Black National Question, the positions of Lenin, Stalin, the Communist International and others were a very reliable guide, and that we definitely did not need to re-prove what the international proletariat had been clear about for some 60 years.*

In developing our line on the Black National Question in the MLOC, the National Question Commission undertook the defense of the positions of the Communist International, while at the same time setting out to understand their concrete application to the

history of the Black people in the United States. Further, many comrades had relatively little direct experience in the Black Liberation Struggle.

Second, in our struggle to combat the right liquidationist or centrist lines on the Black National Question (that is, the line that there is no nation, or that we must prove the Communist International Resolutions today), the left error of impetuosity arose to cover the right deviations we were combatting.

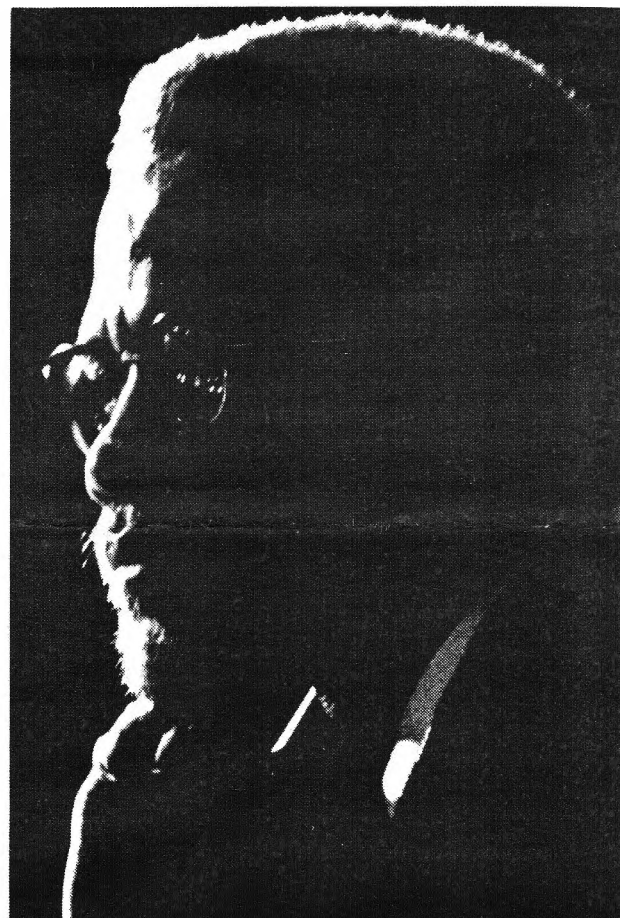
Third, in rushing ahead to publish the article in UNITE! without first resolving this important question of four or five characteristics, democratic centralism did not function properly within the MLOC. In particular, we did not adequately concentrate the experience and views of the cadre, raise them to a higher level, rely upon the most advanced Marxist-Leninist theory, and forge a correct political line.

The philosophical source of these errors is subjective idealism, divorcing the idea of the nation from material reality, and therefore, from genuine Marxist-Leninist theory, which sums

MALCOLM X

**ASSASSINATED:
FEBRUARY 21, 1965**

"YOU CAN'T OPERATE A CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM UNLESS YOU ARE VULTURISTIC, YOU HAVE TO HAVE SOMEONE ELSE'S BLOOD TO SUCK TO BE A CAPITALIST. YOU SHOW ME A CAPITALIST AND I'LL SHOW YOU A BLOODSUCKER. HE CANNOT BE ANYTHING BUT A BLOOD-SUCKER IF HE'S GOING TO BE A CAPITALIST. HE'S GOT TO GET IT FROM SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN HIMSELF, AND THAT'S WHERE HE GETS IT- FROM SOMEWHERE OR SOMEONE OTHER THAN HIMSELF"



nation, the historically constituted, stable community of people, that the four characteristics of a nation must be understood, not in and of themselves.

Furthermore, that because imperialism oppresses nations, each of these four characteristics will certainly not remain stable, but will be transformed in considerable degree through the oppression of nations.

We cannot, therefore, judge the common economic life of a nation, for instance, by the same standards of common economic life by which we evaluate the oppressor nation.

MISTAKE

The MISTAKE of the MLOC was (1) in the right deviation of advancing five rather than four characteristics of a nation, and (2) in suggesting that they be considered criteria, as if they stand independent of the definition of the nation itself, rather than in relation to the historically constituted, stable community, as the characteristics or elements of this community.

CIRCUMSTANCES

The CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH GAVE RISE TO THESE MISTAKES stem from the context and manner in which the MLOC

conditions of the Black Belt South today, and to provide a concrete program and slogans to the right of the Black Nation to self-determination, and the struggle for democratic rights.

In the process, we did not adequately reconsider many of the views on the Black National Question which the Black Workers Congress held. We did not seek to find our own independent bearings.

This was particularly true in regard to the formulation of "criteria." In regard to four or five characteristics, when UNITE! (Vol 1, No 1) went to press, there was already struggle within the MLOC over this question, last August. Rather than resolving this question before publication, which would have been the correct stand, publication proceeded without this question being resolved.

REASONS

THERE WERE THREE REASONS FOR THIS DEVIATION FROM MARXISM-LENINISM.

First, the comrades who were undertaking the work on the Black National Question for the MLOC were relatively untrained theoretically. This was reflected in a relatively low grasp of Marxist-Leninist theory on the National Question, and of the

up the historical materialist experience of the working class itself.

The ideology this represents is petty bourgeois ideology. The vacillating nature of the petty bourgeoisie, between the working class and the bourgeoisie, results in the subjective outlook of this class, an outlook rooted in the dying material basis for its existence. Impetuosity reflects this vacillating class stand. Within the MLOC, while the majority of comrades are of working class backgrounds, the struggle against petty bourgeois ideology must be a conscious struggle. In allowing this error to occur in the MLOC, it has confirmed for us the need to intensify the struggle against petty bourgeois ideology within our organization.

RECTIFICATION

THE MEANS TO RECTIFY THESE ERRORS IS IN UPHOLDING THE CORRECT STAND, VIEWPOINT, AND METHOD on the national question in general, and the Black National question and Chicano National question in particular.

Everyone, of course, admits the necessity for the correct stand, viewpoint, and method. But the real question is whether or not dialectical and historical materialism is truly the guiding light in our practice. (Cont p 26)

STAND ON THE BLACK NATIONAL QUESTION

A correct stand on the national question in general, and the Black National question in particular, starts from the realization that the national question is a component part of proletarian revolution, that it is a fundamental class question. *It is only if we approach the national question with the stand of the proletariat, that we can accurately grasp the general trend of historical development, make a scientific analysis of the question, and point to the correct resolution of the contradiction.*

The stand of the proletariat is against the bourgeoisie, and with all those who are exploited and oppressed by monopoly capitalism. With the final and monopoly stage of capitalism, imperialism, national antagonisms intensify, they are not resolved. It is only with proletarian revolution that the national question becomes transformed from an antagonistic to a non-antagonistic contradiction.

In considering the Black National question, we do not begin with our own, limited experience, but with the international experience of the proletariat over the last 64 years, since Lenin first advanced the theory of an oppressed nation in the Black Belt South of the U.S. In determining the national character of Black oppression in the U.S., Lenin began with the question of rights.

"They (Blacks) should be classed as an oppressed nation, for the equality won in the Civil War of 1861-65 and guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic was in many ways increasingly curtailed in the chief Negro areas (the South). "Statistics and Sociology", Lenin, CW, Vol. 23, p. 275

Lenin grasped this from Russia, he did not need to go to the Black Belt South. Has this situation changed today? Does there remain a qualitative difference between the situation of the Black worker, and the multi-national proletariat as a whole, in regard to wages, benefits, voting patterns, education, housing, medical care, concentration in prisons, etc?

Scientific investigation today reveals that rather than the situation of the Black worker improving, the absolute impoverishment has increased, and indeed assumes new forms all the time.

Recognizing this oppression, we ask, is this simply a result of class exploitation, or is something else involved which explains the qualitative difference between the Black worker and the multi-national proletariat as a whole. Lenin concluded, as we must, that the source of this division within the working class was the existence of an oppressed nation in the Black Belt South.

Lenin recognized, as we must, that imperialism does not resolve class or national contradictions, as Lovestone, Browder, and the RCP, U.S.A. put forward but sharpens them. The salvation of nations, in the era of imperialism, rests with the revolutionary action of the proletariat.

This means that *the struggle for self-determination of oppressed nations is a crucial and component part of the class struggle.* In speaking of Ireland, Lenin stated that,

"A blow delivered against the power of the English imperialist bourgeoisie by a rebellion in Ireland is a hundred times more significant politically than a blow of equal force delivered in Asia or in Africa", "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up", Lenin, CW, Vol. 22, p. 357.

Obviously the same holds true for the oppressed Black nation in the South, perhaps even more so. The struggle for self-determination in the South strikes directly at the heart of U.S. imperialist rule, while a blow struck around the world is directed at the tentacles of imperialism.

A correct stand on the national question recognizes that national contradictions become more intense with imperial-

ism, and are not resolved. The proletarian stand on the Black National question recognizes the fact that the struggle for self-determination is a component part of the class struggle against monopoly capitalism, and therefore upholds the struggle for self-determination and democratic rights.

It is the failure to recognize this which is the fundamental explanation for the lines of the RCP, U.S.A., the CLP, Harry Chang, and others who take a bourgeois class stand on the national question. They must be considered, in Lenin's words, scoundrels and imperialists.

VIEWPOINT ON THE BLACK NATIONAL QUESTION

The Marxist viewpoint is *materialism*. We rely upon concrete material reality as our guide, the foundation of our knowledge. Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, our theoretical guide to action, represents the international experience of the proletariat summed up.

Uphold the Right of Self-Determination for the BLACK NATION!

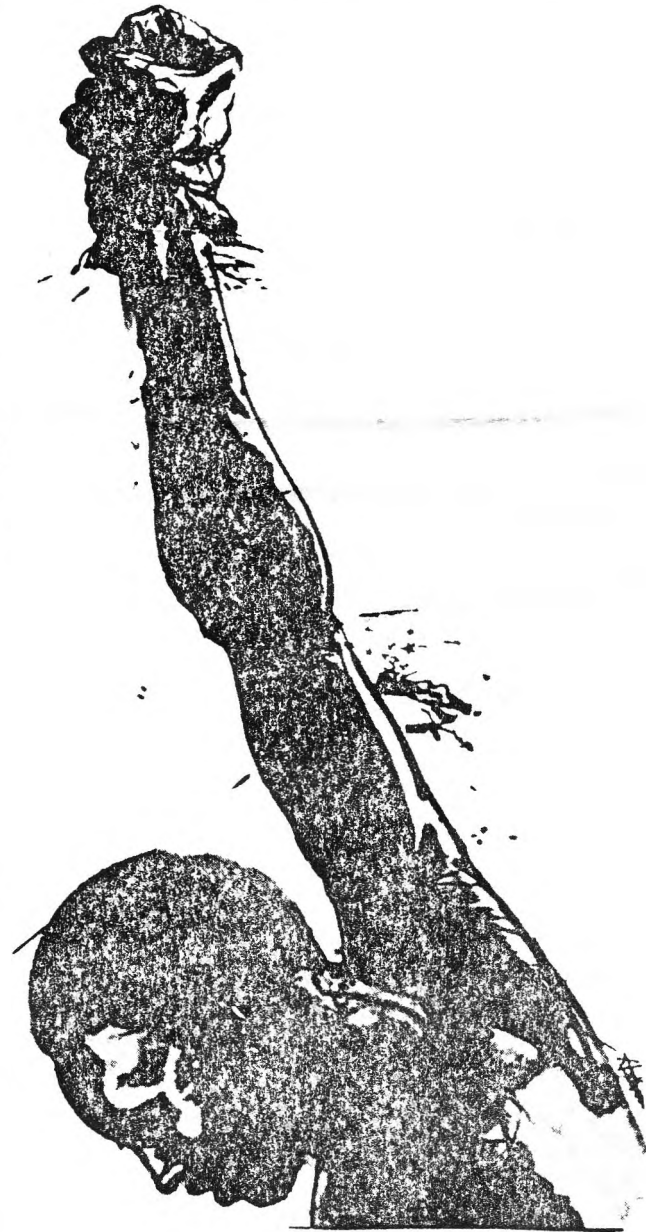
A correct viewpoint begins with the position of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought on this question, originally developed by Lenin, upheld by Stalin, the Comintern, further developed by Harry Haywood in the late 1950's, and Comrade Mao Tse-tung's statements to the Afro American people in 1963 and 1968. Mao Tse-tung stated in 1963 that

"The struggle of the Black people in the U.S. is bound to merge with the American workers movement, and this will eventually end the criminal rule of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class."

Clearly Comrade Mao Tse-tung points to the very special and decisive importance of the Black struggle, such that it, together with the workers struggle, will end the rule of monopoly capitalism.

Relying upon the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, we can apply the Marxist theory of a nation, containing a basic definition and four characteristics. This means in considering, for instance, the "common economic life" of the Black Belt South, we do not start by looking for the manifestations of some textbook definition of that economic life in the Black Belt South, i.e., in a bourgeoisie, proletariat, petty bourgeoisie, national market, etc.

On the contrary, we look to see whether previously disunited communities have been transformed into a single stable community owing to the unifying force of an imperialist economy. Stalin pointed out that the Georgian principalities were united into a national community by the unifying force of Russian capital intruding into their previously disunited existence. Therefore, the function of common economic life is to unite groups into a single community, something which, in the era of competitive capitalism can be done only by establishing the integrity of national markets, but which, in the era of imperialism, can and is done by the unifying force of the imperialist home market itself. Imperialism, noted Stalin, calls to life previously



non-existent national movements

METHOD ON THE BLACK NATIONAL QUESTION

Our method of investigation is dialectical and historical materialism. All questions must be seen in both their entirety and their interconnection. This was Lenin's method in considering the Black National question.

"The inference is clear. We must seek to build a reliable foundation of precise and indisputable facts that can be confronted to any of the 'general' or 'example-based' arguments now so grossly misused in certain countries. And if it is to be a real foundation, we must take not individual facts, but the *sum total* of facts, without a single exception, relating to the question under discussion. Otherwise there will be the inevitable,

and fully justified, suspicion that the facts were selected or compiled arbitrarily, that instead of historical phenomena being presented in objective interconnection and interdependence and treated as a whole, we were presenting a 'subjective' concoction to justify what might prove to be a dirty business. This does happen and more often than one might think.", "Statistics and Sociology", Lenin, CW, Vol. 23, pp. 272-273

Lenin put this another way in a letter to Inessa Armand.

"The whole spirit of Marxism, its whole system, demands that each proposition should be considered 1. only historically, 2. only in connection with others, 3. only in connection with concrete experience of history.", "To Inessa Armand", Lenin, CW, Vol. 35, p. 250.

This is the method we must employ, to consider all the facts, to consider their interdependence and interconnection, the unity of opposites, and to rely upon historical experience

Here we must ask, have the people in the Black Belt South evolved in a given geographical area, do they represent a stable population in this area, do they represent a relatively homogeneous and distinct community in this area? These questions must be considered in view of the entire history of the Black people in this country, over 400 years, and they must be considered in relation to the multi-national state, not just the Black Belt South.

It would be an idealist method to simply look at one particular decade, or even just the period since World War II, consider census statistics, and draw a conclusion. Migrations, for instance, must be considered both in their entire pattern, as well as establishing the sources for these migrations, which in the case of the Black Belt South, stem from imperialist oppression and exploitation. As Lenin stated,

"the policy of oppressing nationalities, is one of dividing nations", "National Equality", Lenin, CW, Vol. 20, p. 237.

The method of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought requires that we consider something in its inception, growth, and development, and thereby know it in its present form. This is the only correct method in taking up the national question.

CONCLUSION

In the struggle to approach the Black National question and Chicano National question from the correct stand, viewpoint, and method, the MLOC has been able to rectify its right deviation on the national question and develop a relatively correct ideological and political line. At the same time we have taken steps toward correcting errors in the functioning of democratic centralism and the development of political line in the MLOC.

Since the struggle against the right liquidationist line of the RU in 1973-1974, many advances have been made in taking a relatively correct line on the Black National question- although on the Chicano National question the struggle against opportunism for a correct ideological and political line is less developed. Even with advances, the struggle against opportunism, both the right opportunist lines and the centrist lines, must be escalated.

In the last many months, centrism on the Black National question has become an increasing danger, under the guise that "we are still investigating the question" or that "we must go to the Black Belt South for investigation." These lines represent centrism because a correct line on the Black National question has existed in the international communist movement for 64 years. It would seem that if Lenin can correctly sum up the situation in the Black Belt South 64 years ago from Russia- we can do as much from New York or San Francisco now.

Centrism is the ideology of adaption to subordinate the interests of the

proletariat to the interests of the petty bourgeoisie. During the Second International, Stalin points out that the centrists policy consisted

"in embellishing the opportunism of the Rights with Left phrases and subordinating the Lefts to the Rights", "Industrialization and the Right Deviation", Stalin, WORKS, Vol. 11, p. 294

In the current context, centrism means avoiding a direct stand on the question, stating the need for "further investigation", while at the same time posing themselves in opposition to the open right liquidationist position.

The essence of a correct line on the National Question is the correct stand, viewpoint, and method, not first hand investigation or the need to prove or disprove the correctness of the Comintern Resolutions.

Lenin was very clear about his attitude toward those who defend self-determination, yet remain silent regarding nations oppressed by "their own" nation.

"The proletariat must demand freedom of political separation for the colonies and nations oppressed by 'their own' nation. Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words, neither confidence nor class solidarity would be possible between the workers of the oppressed and the oppressor nations, the hypocrisy of the reformists and Kautskyites, who defend self-determination but remain silent about the nations oppressed by 'their own' nation and kept in 'their own' state by force, would remain unexposed", "Socialist Revolution and Self-Determination", Lenin, CW, Vol. 22, pp. 147-148.

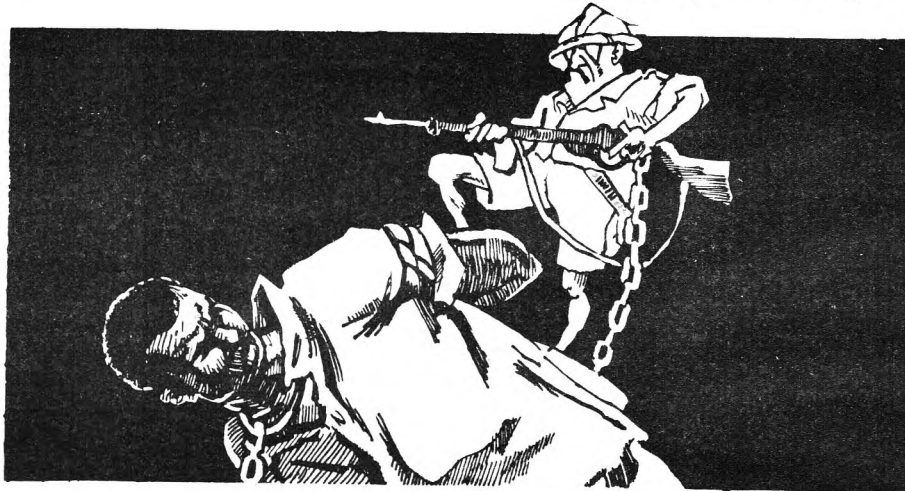
The MLOC calls upon all advanced detachments of the class struggle to intensify the struggle against opportunism and centrism on the Black National question and the Chicano National question, to actively bring Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to the advanced elements in the revolutionary national movements, and to merge the class and national struggles. In particular, a correct ideological and po-

litical line on the Chicano National question must be advanced against the existing opportunist lines, concrete program and content must be given to the slogan of the right of the Black Nation to self-determination up to and including secession, and to the struggle for democratic rights of all oppressed minorities. All forms of national chauvinism and bourgeois nationalism must be combated vigorously.

A very important question which must be raised and resolved is the question of building genuine multi-national unity, which means building a genuine multi-national communist party. This question is not resolved by simply recruiting comrades from different nationalities in the same organization. This may, or may not mean that genuine multi-national unity exists. The entire question of actually building that unity within the existing Marxist-Leninist organizations and collectives, cementing that unity into a vanguard communist party, needs much greater attention. The key to this process is the development of a correct ideological and political line, together with policy and program on self-determination for oppressed nations and democratic rights for national minorities.

Because the National Question is a component part of proletarian revolution, it is a fundamental question of building the unity of the proletariat as a whole, one around which all "lack of clarity" must be eliminated. As Lenin stated,

"In the internationalist education of the workers of the oppressor countries, emphasis must necessarily be laid on their advocating freedom for the oppressed countries to secede and their fighting for it. Without this there can be no internationalism. It is our right and duty to treat every Social-Democrat of an oppressed nation who fails to conduct such propaganda as a scoundrel and an imperialist. This is an absolute demand, even where the chance of secession being possible and 'practicable' before the introduction of socialism is only one in a thousand." "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up", Lenin, CW, Vol. 22, p. 346. ★



The Struggle for the Right of Self-Determination

Criticism/Self-Criticism On The National Question

In 1930, the Communist International pointed out that the CPUSA "has not yet succeeded in overcoming in its own ranks all under-estimation of the struggle for the slogan of the right to self-determination, and still less succeeded in doing away with all lack of clarity on the Negro question. In Party discussion the question was often wrongly put" (UNITE!, Vol 1, No. 1, p-16). In the last few years, since the break with the revisionist line of the RCP on the Black National Question, important steps have been taken toward recognizing the importance of the struggle for the slogan of the right to self-determination, and toward reaching clarity on the "Negro question" -- but we remain a long way from successfully carrying out this task which the Communist International set before the American working class some 46 years ago.

The MLOC has consistently recognized the objective importance of the national question as a component part of proletarian revolution. Historically in the United States, whether or not to recognize the existence of an oppressed nation in the Black Belt South, to raise the struggle for the slogan of the right to self-determination for this oppressed nation, provide concrete material aid to this struggle, has always been a clear demarcation between revolution and reaction, Marxism-Leninism and opportunism.

In UNITE!, Vol 1, No 1 (pg 10, c.3, p3), the MLOC stated that, "In particular, each of Stalin's five criteria must be fully demonstrated." This is one example, as the Comintern pointed out, of putting the question wrongly!

Comrade Stalin, in THE NATIONAL QUESTION AND LENINISM (Vol 11, p 348-9), in combatting the opportunist lines at that time in Russia, stated clearly that,

"The Russian Marxists have long had their theory of the nation. According to this theory, a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of the common possession of four principal characteristics, namely a common

language, a common territory, a common economic life, and a common psychological make-up manifested in common specific features of national culture. This theory, as we know, has received general recognition in our Party.

It is evident from your letters that you consider this theory inadequate. You therefore propose that the four characteristics of a nation be supplemented by a fifth, namely, that a nation possesses its own, separate national state. You consider that there is not and cannot be a nation unless this fifth characteristic is present.

I think that the scheme you propose, with its new, fifth characteristic of the concept "nation", is profoundly mistaken, and cannot be justified either theoretically or in practice, politically."

It is clear from what Comrade Stalin stated that the position of the MLOC that there exists "five criteria" is a definite right deviation on the national question, applied to the Black Nation in the United States. This deviation is two-fold. First, in adding an additional fifth factor to the theory of the nation. Second, in referring to what Stalin indicates as "characteristics" or "elements" as *criteria*. Both of these errors must be repudiated.

This repudiation of these errors is a result both of the internal struggle within the MLOC which developed around these questions, and the comradely criticism offered the MLOC by the Communist Workers Group (ML) pointing out the deviation regarding five, rather than four characteristics.

SELF-CRITICISM

In advancing this self-criticism, the MLOC points to the general importance of criticism and self-criticism, around the National Question in particular, and its crucial need within the revolutionary movement in general.

Comrade Stalin pointed out two vital elements of self-criticism in

"The Work of the April Joint Plenum of the C.C. and C.C.C.!", WORKS, Vol 11, p. 38. First, that we must conduct self-criticism to "sharpen the vigilance of the working class, make it pay more attention to our shortcomings, facilitate their correction...". And second, "to improve the political culture of the working class." In the case of the former, there should be little doubt of the importance of sharpening our vigilance against deviations and opportunist lines on the National Question, and overcoming the numerous weaknesses in theory and practice on the Black National question amongst Marxist-Leninists in this country. With the latter, it is a question of training cadre to find their own independent bearings, to always 'ask the whys and wherefores of everything', it is in this spirit that self-criticism is offered by the MLOC.

The first error of the MLOC was to add an additional fifth feature to the Marxist theory of a nation. Stalin is clear that the Russian Marxist theory of a nation contains four "characteristics" (Vol. 11, p. 348, line 14) or "elements" (Vol. 11, p. 351, line 19), (1) a common language, (2) a common territory, (3) a common economic life, (4) a common psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.

The error the MLOC made was to split the question of psychological make-up and common culture into two separate elements of the nation, rather than one, as Stalin indicates. Another similar right deviation, often occurring in our movement, is to consider the basic definition of a nation, the "historically constituted, stable community of people" as a fifth element of the theory of a nation.

This deviation must be distinguished from the opportunist line which adds some completely different element, such as the existence of a state apparatus, which Stalin criticized, as a fifth characteristic of the theory of the nation. The historical analogy today is represented by the RCP's line of a "peasant nation".

(Red Papers 5, p. 31)

(Cont. p. 25)

COMMUNIST LINE



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